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ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

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A MEMOIR

OF

ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

PREPARED FOR

The Massachusetts Historical Society

BY

ROBERT C. WINTHROP, JR.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.
1897.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

Hon. Robert C. Winthrop died in Boston, November 16, 1894, in his eighty-sixth year. The Massachusetts Historical Society — over which he had formerly presided for thirty years, and of which he had been a member more than half a century — soon after printed and circulated the tributes then paid to him by leading members, and, in accordance with usage, appointed one of their associates to prepare a memoir. This duty fell upon the undersigned, and the reason the performance of it has been so long delayed, in conformity to Mr. Winthrop's wishes, is explained in the following pages. For the present volume the Society is in no way responsible. The memoir is issued in a separate form for convenient reference and for distribution among leading public libraries and the libraries of learned institutions. Any such libraries which do not receive it may, if they so desire, communicate with the undersigned.

Several engravings of Mr. Winthrop — none of them wholly satisfactory — have from time to time appeared in different publications. Instead of furnishing one which has been used before, the experiment has been tried of reproducing likenesses of him taken at widely separated periods of his life, and which possess, at least, the merit

of novelty. The earliest is from a medallion by Ball Hughes in 1841, the latest is from a snap-shot, in his study at Brookline, in 1891. The two which serve as a frontispiece represent him at the respective ages of forty-five and seventy.

It may be well to add that the letters from which extracts are given were written by him either to intimate friends or to near relatives, but it has not been thought worth while to take up space by specifying the name of the person to whom each particular passage was addressed.

ROBERT C. WINTHROP, Jr.

10 Walnut Street, Boston.
September, 1897.

MEMOIR.

DOUBTS have been repeatedly expressed with regard to the wisdom of that rule of this Society which exacts a memoir of a deceased member from one of his associates. In a body numbering never more than one hundred, and often less, it is sometimes difficult to procure such service, and the most suitable person to perform it is not always within our ranks. It seemed to Mr. Winthrop eminently fitting that at some meeting following the death of a member there should be appropriate recognition of his career and character, but he considered that anything of the nature of formal biography should be governed by circumstances and not obligatory. Such a duty is sometimes welcome. It was so to him when he wrote for us with signal success the memoirs of two of his most cherished friends, Nathan Appleton and John Henry Clifford, or when he prepared for a kindred Society one of the most notable of his commemorative productions, his memoir of Henry Clay. He was, moreover, of opinion that memoirs prepared for a historical society should carry with them an air of deliberation, and that a considerable interval should ordinarily elapse between eulogies printed at the time of a member's death and the publication of a detailed narrative

of his life. Without seeking to impose his views upon others, he specified with distinctness the course to be pursued in his own case. Aware that the leading events of his career were easily accessible in works of reference,[1] foreseeing that he would not merely become the subject of obituary notices in the newspaper press throughout the country,[2] but that one or more of the institutions with which he had been actively associated would distribute tributes to him in pamphlet form,[3] he preferred that anything farther in the way of biographical commemoration should be postponed. In looking back over his exceptionally long life he felt that he had received, on the whole, ample recognition of any services he might have rendered to the causes of religion and philanthropy, or in the fields of history and oratory. As a statesman, however, he considered that he had not always been fully understood or fairly represented, though he realized that the inaccuracies of which he sometimes complained were the inevitable result of party conflicts, the details of which had been imperfectly appreciated by later writers. During a political career which began as far back as 1833, he had accumulated a mass of correspondence with public men, selections from which, if properly annotated, could hardly

[1] The account of him in Appleton's Dictionary of American Biography is the most accurate, as far as it goes.

[2] Nearly five hundred such notices, none of them duplicates, were collected for the writer by news-agents.

[3] The most important of these separate tributes may also be found in the published Proceedings of this Society and in those of the Peabody Trustees. Others may be met with, either in the annual reports of learned, charitable, educational, and religious institutions, or in the kind words of personal friends, which found their way into print in various forms.

fail, he believed, to interest and edify future students of New England history, but he had no desire that they should be printed for a long time to come. His personal relations with some of the bitterest of his opponents grew amicable in after years; and as it had become his lot to survive both friends and foes, he preferred that his departure should not be signalized by any unnecessary stirring of the embers of by-gone controversies. For the customary memoir for this Society it would, in his judgment, suffice to furnish a succinct narrative of facts and dates for reference, containing comparatively little of personal vindication, and still less of glowing panegyric. At different periods he had prepared a variety of autobiographical material, which he never found leisure to arrange or complete. Portions of it he from time to time made use of in his various productions. Another portion, consisting of reminiscences of European celebrities with whom he had been well acquainted, he condensed and privately printed not long before his death. What remains has been drawn upon when necessary in these pages, and may one day prove of value in editing his correspondence.

I.

Of his ancestry it is enough to say that the great Puritan leader, Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts, had seven sons who lived to manhood, six of whom left issue; but the male lines of the five younger ones having gradually become extinct, all descendants of the Governor bearing the name of Winthrop now

spring from his eldest son, John Winthrop the younger, who, after having helped to found the Massachusetts Colony, was long Governor of Connecticut, an early Fellow of the Royal Society, and one of the most accomplished scholars of his time. At the close of the Revolutionary War this line was represented by six brothers, three of whom preferred to live chiefly in New York, one settled in South Carolina, another cast in his lot with the mother country, while one only saw fit to maintain the hereditary connection of his family with Boston, where he lived and died. This was Thomas Lindall Winthrop, for many years Lieutenant-Governor of this State and President of this Society, who married Elizabeth Bowdoin, daughter of Sir John Temple, and granddaughter of Governor James Bowdoin of Revolutionary memory.[1] The Marquis de Chastellux, in his "Travels in North America," in 1782, alludes to the beauty of this lady when a girl. A portrait by Gilbert Stuart gives some idea of the dignity and grace of her maturer years, while her son Robert bore lifelong testimony to her devotion to her family and earnest, unaffected Christian faith. She died in her fifty-first year, in 1825, having had fourteen children, of whom the subject of this memoir was the youngest; but he survived his brothers and sisters for so long a period that in his old age few people remembered that he ever had any. It may therefore be well to mention, without naming them all, that his eldest brother, Thomas, had before his early death been in the U. S. Diplomatic

[1] For a memoir of Hon. Thomas L. Winthrop, see the third volume of the Transactions of the American Antiquarian Society, of which he was also President. A shorter one is in the second volume of the Fourth Series of our own Collections.

Service; the next, James (who took the name of Bowdoin), was an antiquarian, and an active member of this Society; the third, William, first scholar of his class at Harvard, at the time of his death was studying for the ministry; two others, John and Grenville, were members of the Bar and of the Massachusetts Legislature, besides successively commanding the Suffolk brigade of militia; their married sisters having been Elizabeth, wife of Rev. Benjamin Tappan, D. D.; Sarah, wife of Hon. George Sullivan; Augusta, wife of John Smyth Rogers of New York; and Anne, second wife of Dr. John C. Warren.

Robert Charles Winthrop was born in Milk Street, Boston, May 12, 1809, in the house of his great-uncle, Hon. James Bowdoin, then U. S. Minister to Spain and Associate Minister to France.[1] His mother was his only teacher until he was nearly seven, after which he successively attended two private schools, the first kept by the estimable Deacon Samuel Greele in what was then called Pond Street, the second by an Englishman, John Carlton Fisher, who had been an usher at a public school in his own country, and to whom Mr. Winthrop was always grateful for having instilled into him that love of classical scholarship — more particularly of the Latin poets — which proved one of the most endur-

[1] For many years after his marriage in 1786, Hon. T. L. Winthrop occupied a large house, till recently standing though much degraded, on the corner of Sudbury Street and Alden Court. A reverse of fortune broke up this establishment, when the Milk Street house was loaned to him, but on the return of Mr. Bowdoin from Europe his nephew removed to No. 2 Hamilton Place, which then overlooked the Common. Later, in 1824, he purchased and much enlarged a house still standing on the lower corner of Beacon and Walnut streets, where he lived until his death in 1841.

ing pleasures of his life. As Dr. Fisher confined his instruction to the ancient languages, Mr. Winthrop at the same time studied other branches, first with a young William Apthorp, but longer with Warren Colburn, afterward a well-known mathematician. His final preparation for College was at the Boston Latin School, the head-master of which was then the much respected Benjamin Apthorp Gould, of whom Mr. Winthrop was the favorite pupil. More than all the prizes of his school and college days he valued two sets of volumes which came to him unexpectedly at this period. One was Murray's edition of the works of Washington Irving, a parting personal gift from Master Gould, inscribed on the fly-leaf, "Roberto Carolo Winthrop, juveni ingenuo, omnibus caro, ac omne laude digno, hoc parvulum amoris pignus atque diligentiæ urbanitatisque præmium, datum est ab amico et tutore B. A. G. Scholæ Latinæ Bostoniensis, A. D. MDCCCXXIV." The other was a fine edition of Sophocles, presented to him publicly, with some very complimentary expressions, by Mayor Quincy on the platform of Faneuil Hall before the dinner to the Franklin Medal scholars, and inscribed, "Scholæ Latinæ Filio Digno Roberto C. Winthrop, ab Urbe, pro meritis datum. MDCCCXXIV."

Although prepared to pass the entrance examination for Harvard at the age of fourteen, he had waited a year by his father's desire in order not to precede an elder brother less studious than himself; but he now took up his residence in Cambridge, which he left in 1828 with the third honors of a class whose foremost scholar was his chum, the short-lived Charles Chauncy Emerson, younger brother of Ralph Waldo Emerson,

and, in the opinion of many of his contemporaries, a man of stronger intellect. In mathematics Mr. Winthrop excelled all his classmates, who elected him their President, but, as Professor Channing told him, he "did too many things" to be within reach of a First Part. He commanded the military company of the College, the famous but long extinct "Harvard Washington Corps." He presided over the select convivial reunions of the Porcellian Club and the Knights of the Square Table. He was Orator of the Hasty Pudding Club, was alike enrolled among the notorious Med. Fac. and the exemplary Phi Beta Kappa; sang bass in the Chapel choir, played a subordinate musical instrument in the concerts of the Pierian Sodality, and not infrequently stole away to town (quite a little journey in those days) to attend some theatrical performance or social gathering. The only wonder was that with all this he managed to secure the Third Part, which he signalized by a Commencement oration entitled "Public Station."[1] Immediately after the exercises Hon. T. L. Winthrop gave in his son's honor, at Porter's Tavern, a large reception, which was attended by John Quincy Adams, then President, and other persons of distinction, but Andrew Stevenson, Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives, was conspicuous by his absence, though he had expressed an intention of coming and had been seen among the audience. It turned out, drolly enough, that he had taken umbrage at a passage in Mr. Winthrop's oration,

[1] This production, which attracted favorable notice at the time of its delivery, was never considered by its author worthy of a place in his collected works, but is to be found in the late R. G. Parker's "Aids to English Composition."

where, quoting from the Psalms of David, "promotion" had been described as coming "neither from the East, nor from the West, nor yet from the South." The Virginia statesman, perhaps half asleep and probably more familiar with politics than Holy Writ, had got it into his head that this was intended as a compliment to President Adams and the North, in disparagement of other sections of the Union.

I find but five letters written to Mr. Winthrop at this period by college friends. Three of them are little notes from Charles Emerson; the fourth is an entertaining account of a night passed in a Methodist camp meeting on Cape Cod, by Thomas Kemper Davis; the fifth a scrap which I insert here only because the writer, with other titles to remembrance, became a valued Recording Secretary of this Society.

DEARLY BELOVED, — As touching the points of faith and conduct whereof you have enquired of me, it has seemed good to me to vouchsafe the following reply. As to the time when, good. As to the place where, very excellent good. As to the quantity, half a dozen. As to the brand, Forrest Rheims. As to the place from which, Parker and Codman's. And now, most excellent Theophilus, having resolved thy doubts and confirmed thy faith, I commend me to thee and commend thee.

EDMUND, to my brothers and sisters,
QUINCE, to my familiars,
and EDMUND QUINCY, Esquire, to all Europe.

Having thus obtained a bachelor's degree at the age of nineteen, he soon after entered the law-office of Daniel Webster, where his fellow-student was his friend Davis, and where he remained until his admission to the

Suffolk Bar in 1831. Webster was then Senator from Massachusetts and necessarily much in Washington, the local business being attended to by his junior partner. Even when at home he was generally too busy to give much attention to his students, whose duties were to copy papers, look up cases, and prepare briefs; but he repeatedly complimented them on their diligence and on one occasion magnanimously assured them that he had won a case in the United States Supreme Court with a brief prepared by them, which he had only found time to read at the last moment. At very long intervals he discoursed a little on the great principles of jurisprudence, more often favored them with a passing insight into contemporary politics, but whatever he touched upon was always interesting and impressive. To Mr. Winthrop, who had listened with enthusiasm to Webster's address on Bunker Hill in 1825 and to his immortal eulogy on Adams and Jefferson in the following year, conceiving thereby a profound admiration for his intellect and oratory, this daily association with that illustrious man during a large part of three successive years was a source of unmixed pleasure. He cannot, however, be said to have consumed any appreciable amount of midnight oil in that unwearying study of the law which has characterized so many of its votaries. After dark and even before dark he cultivated fashionable society with some degree of assiduity, became a manager of subscription-balls, wore some of the most conspicuous of the party-colored waistcoats then in vogue, and, according to one of his sisters, devoted an unconscionable time to the art of tying voluminous cravats. He exhibited, too, a martial ardor on receiv-

ing a commission in the State Militia, serving first as ensign and then as lieutenant in the Boston Light Infantry, familiarly known as "Tigers," a corps which he soon after commanded. He contributed now and then to periodical literature, the first sum of money he ever earned having been eight dollars (at the regular compensation of one dollar a page) for an article on "American Annals" in the "North American Review;" but a previous article on "Temperance Pledges," in the "New England Magazine," not only elicited no pay at all, but became the subject of some animadversion from teetotalers. When the time came for putting up a sign in Court Street, as was the custom of young counsellors in those days, he met with the average success of a beginner, but did not regret being soon drawn into politics; and though he kept his office open until he entered Congress, it grew more and more to be frequented by place-hunters than by clients. For a part of the time, moreover, his attention was distracted from other pursuits by an attachment which resulted in his marriage, March 12, 1832, to Eliza, only child of Francis Blanchard of Boston by his wife Mary Anne Cabot, mother by a former marriage of the late John Clarke Lee of Salem. Mrs. Winthrop, a young woman of marked personal attractions and great vivacity, having lost both her parents in early childhood, had been brought up in the family of her great-uncle and guardian, Samuel Pickering Gardner, a former member of this Society and one of the best of men, to whose widow (Rebecca Russell Lowell) many of Mr. Winthrop's entertaining descriptions of Congressional life were subsequently addressed. The happy pair devoted much of

their honeymoon to a trip to Maryland and Virginia, where they were received with true Southern hospitality, among the houses at which they were successively the guests for one or more days having been those of two exceptionally distinguished statesmen, James Madison and James Barbour, both great talkers and full of the most interesting reminiscences. "You see us," said the ex-President to Mr. Winthrop, "surrounded by negroes. They are eating us out of house and home, and gladly would I emancipate them, but I cannot make up my mind to what would be a cruelty. They are utterly helpless but for us, and they are as much attached to the homestead as we are. I cannot drive them from our doors unprovided for, and there seems no practicable mode of securing them from want in a state of freedom." Pursuing the topic, he added, "I am beginning to hope, however, that slavery will in some way come to an end at no very distant day. The debates in our State Convention of 1830 were full of encouragement, exhibiting a revolution in opinion on this subject hardly second in importance to anything which had occurred since the Revolution of 1776. These debates gave me the first confident hope that domestic slavery in this country would not be eternal." In Washington Mr. and Mrs. Winthrop came into contact with the actual President, Andrew Jackson, a very different type of ruler, and in Baltimore they had a touching interview with Charles Carroll, last survivor of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, then ninety-five years old.

The accident of Henry Clay's decision to visit Boston in the autumn of 1833 first drew marked attention to

Mr. Winthrop's gifts as a public speaker. Clay had been an unsuccessful candidate for the Presidency in the preceding year; but neither this defeat, nor his more recent differences with Webster on the subject of the Tariff, had cooled the ardor of his Boston followers, the younger portion of whom arranged a special demonstration in his honor. Mr. Winthrop was made chairman of a committee to escort him to his hotel, where he made him an address of welcome and, before his departure, presided at a banquet at which the guest of the evening was presented with a pair of silver pitchers. The felicity of Mr. Winthrop's utterances on these two occasions was so much commented on that, a few weeks later, he was invited to make the principal address at Faneuil Hall at a caucus of the anti-Jackson or National Republican party (soon to adopt the famous name of Whigs) prior to the State election for Governor. Our former associate, Hon. William Sullivan, author of the "Political Class-Book" and "Letters on Public Characters," was among his audience and wrote a friend as follows: —

"I rejoice we have a young orator to keep up the holy flame of old Faneuil Hall. I may be allowed, without the charge of vanity, to consider myself a judge of such performances, and I consider this not merely a good speech for a first effort, but one which any practised man might have been proud to make. It was pertinent to the occasion; it was gentlemanly and decorous in language; it was well digested and regular in order; singularly free from embarrassment and highly pleasing in manner."[1]

[1] It was never printed in full, but may be described as having coupled an effective arraignment of Jackson's policy with an earnest

Soon after appointed to the staff of the Governor elect, John Davis, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, he also became a member of the State Central Committee of his party, — a post with which he was long identified. Both as junior member and subsequently chairman of this influential body, his colleagues placed so much reliance upon his pen that for a number of years the Addresses to Electors and the Resolutions for Conventions were written wholly or in part by him. Now to be found only in the form of rare pamphlets, or in bound volumes of newspapers, they are well worth the careful perusal of any student of Massachusetts history.[1] Having in the spring of 1834 been placed at the head of a committee of the young men of Boston to memorialize Congress on the subject of the removal of the government deposits from the Bank of the United States, Mr. Winthrop made a vigorous speech in Faneuil Hall in opposition to the Administration, following it up by others in different places during the ensuing twelve months. In the spring of 1835, the Whig members of the Legislature having nominated Daniel Webster for the Presidency, he actively supported that nomination by an effective speech at Faneuil Hall at the outset, by similar speeches there and elsewhere during the Presidential campaign of 1836, and by the preparation of a variety of printed circulars and resolutions on the same

appeal to the conservative young men of Massachusetts to give more active attention to their political interests and their political duties.

[1] It was the custom to submit them to the approval of the party leaders, and on some of Mr. Winthrop's private copies I find such pencilled memoranda as, "Webster wrote opening paragraphs, next mine," and "Webster and Everett both had a finger in this pie, but were not thought to have much improved its flavor."

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subject, including the greater part of an Address to the People of the United States, written for a public meeting in New York at the request of Hiram Ketchum. These campaign speeches of Mr. Winthrop, with many others delivered by him between the last-named year and 1840, — some uttered in different parts of New England, some in New York, — while they were rapturously greeted by his audiences and much lauded by newspapers of his own way of thinking, were very imperfectly reported. As most of them now exist, if they exist at all, only in manuscript, I quote a few passages from those just mentioned in order to give some idea of what might be termed his "early manner."

What, sir, has been the course of the President? I will not trouble this meeting with a detailed statement of it, but what one power that he fairly has, has he not abused, and what one that he has not, has he not usurped or grasped at? Look at the veto power, — that awful attribute of kings, but which hardly any king has dared to wield almost within the memory of man, — it is matter of record that it has directly or indirectly been employed by our present Chief Magistrate a greater number of times than in all the other years since the creation of the Constitution. Take, too, the power of removal from office, — a merely constructive power at the best, thrown into the Executive hand by the mere casting vote of a Vice-President in the early days of our government, — it is ascertained with indisputable accuracy that it has been used by our present Chief Magistrate to the full of three times as often as by all his predecessors put together. And then, sir, his course as to the Bank. . . . There are some deposits more sacred than the public funds, deposits which money cannot pay for, which gold cannot redeem, — certainly not

that gold which has been shorn of the badge of our liberty and the motto of our Union. Liberty and the Constitution which secures it, what are these but sacred, precious deposits, intrusted to our keeping by our fathers for our enjoyment and that of our posterity, and who that has an eye to the condition of his country can fail to see the vulture hand of Andrew Jackson hanging over and clutching at these deposits? His whole career has clearly manifested the tyrannous design to set up his arbitrary and despotic will as the sole standard of government and to make himself the master instead of the servant of the American people. With the sanction of the party by whom he is supported, the Constitution has been violated, the laws have been trampled on, the public treasure has been seized, the judiciary has been menaced, the people's interests have been overlooked, the people's rights have been overleaped, the people's money has been squandered, and the people's will has been defied; while in the intimation that he is to be supported for a third term unless some supple tool of his own dictation can be made certain of success, we find a new manifestation of that utter disregard which he has all along evinced for the precepts and practice of our immortal Washington, and of all the other great and good men who have presided over the Republic. But one single act of his whole administration have the people of Massachusetts found it in their consciences to approve. But one ray of pure and patriotic light has gleamed to illumine and render visible the blackness of darkness in which all the rest has been enveloped. And even this, while we are pronouncing it an emanation of patriotism, flames and flickers so fitfully that we are almost constrained to regard it rather as the baser issue of selfish passion. Who doubts that but for the fortunate personal collision between Mr. Calhoun and the President, Nullification in South Carolina would have met the same encouragement and countenance it had before met in Georgia, and would have been, so far as the President could make it, the settled construction of the Constitution? . . .

The country is before long to decide whether he alone shall descend from his proud elevation while the sordid slaves of his will, the slimy spawn of his creation, still cling to and defile it; or whether it shall be wholly and at once purified and become again the source of a rightful, wholesome authority, instead of the sink of a corrupt and arbitrary misrule. Shall the long-expected hour display to us the mere shifting of masters, or shall it bring about the substitution of a good old-fashioned *President* for an obstinate and despotic *Chief?*[1] Shall the Capitol in that day be likened only to the house in that sacred parable from which indeed one unclean spirit was cast out, but into which seven others worse than himself otherwise entered, or shall the whole legion be at once expelled and extirpated? Shall that change be a mere change from one degree of corruption to another, or shall *this corruption put on incorruption* and our liberties be again restored to a sound, healthy constitutional basis? . . .

No one who prizes the great principles for which we are contending can be ignorant who has been their most able and effective assertor. No one who values the safety of the Constitution or has trembled at the perils by which it has been environed, can have failed to recognize its most successful and powerful champion. No one who has marked with disgust and indignation the frequent violations of liberty and law which have been attempted by the present administration, can have been deaf to the voice of thunder which has rebuked, confronted, and driven them back. It is not as the most distinguished son of Massachusetts, it is not merely as a great man — the world over, a great man — that he has been selected as our candidate. We are not called upon as the Webster party, bent upon the elevation of an individual person, nor as a Northern party, seeking the gratification of a sectional prejudice. But we are called upon in the simple faith of the Constitution, in the unmingled love of our Republican Union, to select and support for its highest post him

[1] Jackson's admirers liked to call him "the old chief."

whom we believe most able to bear up its destinies and most faithful to discharge its duties. We are told, over and over again told, that his name awakens little enthusiasm outside of New England, that we cannot elect him, and that we are throwing away our votes. I should be the last person to assert that to his other elements of greatness Mr. Webster unites that fascinating address, that wonderful personal magnetism, which have made another of our leaders an idol of the masses throughout the country. But, sir, Henry Clay is not now in question, and if Webster cannot be elected no Whig can be. An appeal, then, to abandon our candidate is an appeal to abandon our cause, and to let slip a most fitting opportunity of placing on record our profound conviction that the highest honors of the Constitution should be awarded to its ablest defender. A vote thrown for a bad man, a vote thrown for a bad measure, a vote thrown for a false principle, however it may be found on the side of a majority, is a vote thrown away, — away from the purpose for which it was intrusted, away from duty, away from liberty. But a vote thrown in support of Constitutional principles and in favor of one who has devoted his whole life and his unequalled abilities to their defence, though it may fail of its effect and fall dead in the ballot-box, is still nobly, gloriously thrown, — thrown in strict accordance with the first principles of the elective franchise and in the direct line of political and moral duty. . . .

I am not afraid to look defeat in the face, for there is, it cannot be denied, a gleam of sunshine on the horizon. The gorgon head of Andrew Jackson is no longer in the field against us. The smoke of that New Orleans victory will no longer blear and blind the eyes of the American people. The magic of that word Hero will no longer silence the tones of patriotic opposition. The spell is already broken, the charm dissolves apace, the bonds of that fatal destiny are scattered, the people are awaking. . . .

Tell me not there is hope that the Baltimore candidate,

when once installed in the White House, when he has reached the topmost round of his young ambition, will scorn the base degrees by which he did ascend and redeem himself from the dominion of the infamous cabal by which he has been boosted. Such a hope might have been stated with some degree of plausibility while he stood wrapped in the dark cloak of that cherished non-committal policy which was so long his only wear. It was easy then to predicate anything of him which suited his purpose or ours, and difficult to prove anything against him but political intrigue and cunning. But the fox has at last been beaten from his hole, — we have seen his teeth, — and we have seen that, like Samson's foxes, he has a firebrand at his tail which threatens to burn every green thing which is left in the garden of our Liberty. He has been compelled to give in evidence even to the very teeth and forehead of his faults. His opinions, his intentions if elected, are now on record, and he stands pledged by his own signature not to recede from the arrogant pretensions, not to renounce the despotic doctrines, of his predecessor, — not to relax the latter's iron grasp nor cease from perverting all the power and patronage of office to personal and political aggrandizement, — but to follow in his footsteps and perpetuate his policy! Why, sir, of what stuff must that man's conscience be made, of what consistency must be his principles, of what chameleon color, of what Protean shape, of what serpentine stability his mental and moral system, who can call Daniel Webster his first choice for President and Martin Van Buren his second? Not until the whole catalogue of political cutpurses has been exhausted, not at least until the chair of State stands empty and the Constitution must fail unless he fill it, should Van Buren be anything but the last choice of any honest Whig. It is idle to talk of his being a Northern man, who will befriend Northern interests and Northern policy. As I turned over my psalm-book this morning I met with two lines which I adopt as my motto upon this point: —

'No *policy* shall recommend
His country's foe to be my friend.'

Not till the conviction that Martin Van Buren, pledged as he is to perpetuate the system of the present Administration, is a foe, not to the South or North, or East or West only, but to the whole country and its Constitution, is eradicated from the very fibres of my heart, could I assent to his receiving one Whig vote. If we join with anybody, let it be with our friends and not our enemies. And while we shall not part with our own candidate nor admit an equal claim to our support in another, we may go with him and he will go with us to the rescue of the Constitution at any personal sacrifice. We hail therefore the triumph of our Western friends with unfeigned pleasure and desire no better auspices under which to go into our own contest.[1]

In the State election of 1834 Mr. Winthrop had been elected a representative from Boston to the General Court, where he served six years, the last three of them as Speaker. The Massachusetts House of Representatives was then a body of more than five hundred members, over whom it was no light task to preside, but Mr. Winthrop had a natural aptitude for duties the successful discharge of which added largely to his reputation, and he made an exhaustive study of parliamentary law, which stood him in good stead when called upon at a later day to perform similar functions in a national arena. During this period of legislative service in his own Commonwealth his first important speech was in favor of compensation for the destruction of the

[1] In 1836 there were four candidates for the Presidency: Martin Van Buren of New York, William Henry Harrison of Ohio, Hugh L. White of Tennessee, and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts. The allusion in the above paragraph is to the supporters of General Harrison.

Ursuline Convent by a mob. It was succeeded at intervals by elaborate speeches entitled, The Testimony of Infidels, Protection to Domestic Industry, The Sub-Treasury System, and The Votes of Interested Members; but they need not be further described here, as they are to be found in the first volume of his collected works. A lecture by him in Boston, in 1838, on Free Schools and Free Governments, was the first of a long series of non-political productions, prepared by him at intervals between that time and his old age, which soon made him a peculiar favorite on commemorative occasions. It was followed by an address on the Pilgrim Fathers, delivered before the New England Society of New York, in 1839, and which is interesting to compare with his celebrated oration at Plymouth, in 1870, on the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims. Until his election as Speaker he continued his connection with the militia, successively serving on the staff of Governors Davis, Armstrong, and Everett, the duties incident to which position, necessitating attendance at public gatherings in all parts of the State, enabled him to make pleasant acquaintances and to acquire an exceptional knack at *impromptu* after-dinner speaking. His diaries during this early period of his life were very irregularly kept, often not kept at all. The one for 1836 is fuller than the others, and in it, besides chronicling the death of President Madison, the admission of Arkansas and Michigan to the Union, some noteworthy remarks of Mr. Webster on the subject of Agriculture, and the remarkable fact that the sun was not visible in Boston from the 21st of May to the 25th of June, he also

describes at greater or less length Bunker Hill and Fourth of July celebrations, the Two Hundredth anniversaries of Harvard College and the town of Dedham, and great reviews of troops at Greenfield and elsewhere. One entry I copy: —

July 28. Dined at my father's in company with J. Q. Adams, Chief Justice Shaw, and others. President Adams did all the talking and was, as usual, very interesting. He said that he *despaired of the Union*. He believed that the population of the United States was destined soon to overrun not only Texas, but Mexico, and that the inevitable result would be two or more confederacies. The soil of Mexico was inviting, the climate alluring, and he believed the country would fall an easy prey to our hardy adventurers. He prophesied that a century hence would find the whole North American continent, from Labrador to Panama, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, controlled by the Anglo-Saxon race, which would then number one hundred millions. He thought the Canadians were rapidly nearing a separation from British rule, though it might be difficult to unite them with us.

In those days Democrats were familiarly styled by their opponents "Locofocos," — a long-extinct epithet habitually contracted into "Loco." The Loco leader against whom Mr. Winthrop was most often pitted in debates in the Legislature was Robert Rantoul, Jr., an able man who eventually succeeded him in the United States Senate. His political friends in Massachusetts were then so numerous that I name only those of whom he saw most, two of them much older than himself, and all three members of this Society. They were Leverett Saltonstall, of Salem, who afterward served with him in Congress; the great orator, Edward Everett, then

Governor, of whom Mr. Winthrop was long the confidential *aide-de-camp;* and John H. Clifford of New Bedford, afterward Governor of the Commonwealth, with whom Mr. Winthrop maintained a familiar correspondence for forty years. His tribute to Everett and his memoir of Clifford are to be found both in our own Proceedings and in his published volumes. Of Saltonstall he wrote in a commonplace book, after the latter's death in 1845: —

> He had as large a heart as ever beat in human bosom, an earnest faith in things higher than human. His ambition was chastened and regulated. He would have followed principles to the death, but not men. He had a ready, natural, charming eloquence, pouring out clear and wise and honest counsels in a captivating strain. He studied enough to know what he was talking about, and was a well-read lawyer and scholar, but no delver. I shall always honor his memory as that of a genial, generous, whole-souled Christian gentleman, and one of the warmest of friends.

Under the old arrangement of electoral districts the county of Suffolk returned a single representative to Congress, known as the "Member for Boston." In 1834 Abbott Lawrence was appropriately elected to this post, but the cares of his large business interests obliged him to resign in 1836, when some admirers of Mr. Winthrop's rhetoric began to press him for the succession, though he withdrew his name as soon as the movement came to his knowledge, considering it ill-advised and premature. Upon the resignation of Richard Fletcher in 1839, however, the same movement became much more general, when Mr. Webster sent for Mr. Winthrop and said: "I suppose you know you are

again talked of for Congress, and this time I have no doubt you can have the seat if you really wish it. But I have reason to think our friend Lawrence has now more leisure, and is not indisposed for another term. His good-will is important to the party, and as you are so young a man and certain to go later, perhaps you will not mind continuing in the Legislature for the present." Upon Mr. Winthrop's expressing his assent to this arrangement, Mr. Webster continued, in a strain that Mr. Winthrop long afterward regarded as prophetic: "I have had less hesitation in making this suggestion to you as I am by no means sure you will like Washington overmuch when you get there. You have gone fast in Massachusetts politics, and you may go far in National ones. You are thoroughly equipped for public affairs. You have in addition the advantages of not having to work for your living, and of an acquired readiness in debate, which is a precious thing in the hour of need. But, with all this, I question whether to a man of your scholarly instincts and fastidious tastes, the atmosphere of self-seeking and misrepresentation which is so apt to surround a public man of the first rank at the Capital, will not prove grievous and disheartening, — whether you will not one day weary of it all, and wish yourself back in your study at home."

Some six months later, in the spring of 1840, Mr. Webster sent for him to confer privately with regard to the approaching Whig nomination for the Presidency. After admitting that neither Mr. Clay nor himself had any chance of it, he deprecated the prevailing movement in favor of General Harrison, expressing a decided

preference for General Scott, whom he described as a Virginian by birth, with a strong following in the Middle States, a military career sufficiently adventurous to tickle the masses, a good fellow in every way, and a man not merely of patriotic instincts but of robust frame, whereas Harrison was then physically somewhat broken. Mr. Winthrop expressed entire willingness to join in trying to effect Scott's nomination, but pointed out that such a movement would be much strengthened if it were understood that Mr. Webster would consent to waive precedence and take the nomination for Vice-President. Webster did not altogether reject this idea, and efforts were made in various quarters to promote a "Scott and Webster" ticket; but popular feeling was strongly for Harrison, who was nominated and elected on a wave of enthusiasm rarely, if ever, equalled in this country. Meantime the health of Abbott Lawrence had obliged him to resign his seat, and Mr. Winthrop, who had taken an active part in the campaign, was returned Member for Boston at the same general election, — returned not merely for the unexpired term, but for the new Congress to begin in March, and by a larger vote than that accorded to any of his predecessors. About a fortnight before the polling the following letters were interchanged by him and a leading Abolitionist with whom he was not personally acquainted.

Boston, Oct. 27, 1840.

R. C. Winthrop, Esq.:

Sir, — As you are a candidate to represent this district in Congress, permit me as an elector, and on behalf of others as well as myself, to know your sentiments on the subject of

slavery, so far as they may relate to the duties of a member of Congress. For that purpose I would respectfully inquire,

First, whether you concur in opinion with the Resolves relating to slavery and the slave-trade, and the admission of new States into the Union, passed at the last session of the Legislature of this Commonwealth?

Secondly, are you in favor of abolishing all constitutional provisions which require the citizens of Free States to aid in supporting and perpetuating slavery?

I wish it to be understood that these inquiries are for your present views and opinions, and not for the purpose of asking a pledge for any particular course of action in relation thereto as a member of Congress, should you be elected.

Respectfully,

EDMUND JACKSON.

BOSTON, Nov. 2, 1840.

EDMUND JACKSON, ESQ.:

SIR, — In a communication received by me a few days since on my return from the country, you call on me, in behalf of others as well as yourself, to express my sentiments on the subject of slavery so far as they relate to the duties of a member of Congress, and to that end you propound to me two inquiries.

In reply to the first of those inquiries, I beg to state that while I believe that Congress has no authority to interfere with the domestic institutions of the Southern States, yet I have never seen any reason to doubt that it possesses all the powers contemplated in the Resolutions to which you refer me. I have no hesitation in adding that my vote could never be withheld, if I had a vote to give in Congress or elsewhere, whenever I should see a just, practicable, and Constitutional mode of diminishing or mitigating so great an evil as slavery. It is clear, however, that were I, as a candidate for Congress, to express my concurrence in the Resolutions in question,

it would be equivalent to a pledge that I would, if elected, exert myself individually and immediately to bring about the measures which they propose. Such a pledge you do not seem to ask. At all events, it is one which I should be entirely unwilling to give. On the contrary, I might lead you into error were I not explicitly to state that, should I be returned to Congress at the approaching election, I should not conceive it as among the special duties imposed upon me by my constituents to agitate the subject of slavery in any form.

Your second inquiry involves considerations which have never before been presented to my mind. After such brief reflection as I have been able to bestow upon it, I feel bound no less distinctly to declare that I cannot regard it as desirable or expedient to attempt any alterations of the Constitution in relation to slavery. Certainly the best hope for the Country which I venture to entertain at present is that the National Compact may be preserved *as it is*, and may be once more restored to its true interpretation and its rightful supremacy. To these ends any humble efforts of which I am capable would be directed should the electors of this Congressional district honor me with a majority of their suffrages.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obt servant,

Robert C. Winthrop.

II.

The winter journey of a New England Congressman to Washington in those days often involved much fatigue and exposure. Mr. Winthrop left Boston at the beginning of December, and after a short stay in New York, reached Philadelphia without hindrance. His

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subsequent adventures are best described in his own words: —

Left Phil^a at 3, on Friday aft. with Gov. Levi Lincoln for companion. Snow was then falling, and before dark we were involved in a heavy storm. Between 9 and 10 P. M. (near Elkton) the engine-wheels refused to revolve any longer, and we found ourselves several miles from a village, without food or fuel, the fires soon going out in the stoves. There was no chance of lying down, as the cars were crowded, so there Lincoln and I sat shoulder to shoulder the livelong night, surrounded by a lot of noisy fellows, who made our plight additionally hideous by their profane and vulgar merriment. The next morning we had to foot it in the snow more than two miles along the track to a vile tavern, where we got a miserable breakfast. Here we waited five hours for the track to be cleared, finally reaching Baltimore at 9 on Saturday evening, half starved with cold and hunger, having had no meal since breakfast. Sunday the storm raged even more furiously, and I was not indisposed to remain quiet; but about 10 A. M. Lincoln came to me and said, 'Colonel, I don't like travelling on Sunday, but we are the servants of the Government, and there may be no quorum in the House to-morrow unless we start to-day. There is no religion in spending the Sabbath in a hotel like this, and the porter tells me a mail-train leaves in half an hour, with a good chance of reaching Washington before dinner.' We left accordingly, but had hardly proceeded five miles before our snow-plough broke down, and could not be moved, thereby obliging us to return to Baltimore, and try the Frederick track as far as Relay House, which we did not reach till 7 P. M., and where we got the first mouthful since morning. We got away from Relay soon after 8, but found the snow-drifts deeper than ever. We were continually obliged to put back some distance to gather fresh impetus, and it was not till nearly daybreak on Monday morning that I caught sight of the columns

of the Capitol, gilded by as sweet a moonlight as ever rested on a Roman ruin. Lincoln and I trudged on foot to Gadsby's, and, after a bath and a hearty breakfast, were in our seats at the opening of the House.

Social life in Washington was then a very unpretending affair. It was a rare thing for a member of either branch of Congress to own or rent a house. The pay was only eight dollars a day during the session, with an allowance for travelling expenses, and a few insignificant perquisites, such as newspapers, letter-paper, pens, ink, sealing-wax, blotting-books, and a pen-knife. Private rooms in the Capitol, private secretaries in the guise of clerks of committees, were unknown; while even a tithe of the long list of personal expenses and luxuries now charged to the contingent funds would have excited popular indignation. Members lived mostly in large private boarding-houses, the occupants of which were mutually agreed on in advance, — an arrangement which often brought into close association men from different sections of the Union, besides facilitating the frequent exercise of inexpensive hospitality. These boarding-houses were called "Messes," and the one to which Mr. Winthrop first belonged consisted, in addition to his wife and children who soon joined him, of his friend Saltonstall with his family, of Senator Richard Bayard of Delaware with his family, and of Senator Henderson of Mississippi with his family. The following winter he was in a smaller Mess, consisting of his own family and that of John Pendleton Kennedy, then member for Baltimore, afterward Secretary of the Navy and President of the Maryland Historical Society, the

most genial of companions and most entertaining of correspondents, perhaps the closest of all Mr. Winthrop's friends, and to whose memory, it may not be forgotten, he once paid a warm tribute in our Proceedings. A later and a famous Mess, to which he belonged for years, was Mrs. Whitwell's on Capitol Hill, where his associates, for longer or shorter periods, were his colleagues, Joseph Grinnell and George Ashmun, Senators Bates and Davis of Massachusetts, Senators Dayton and Miller of New Jersey, Senators Berrien of Georgia and Badger of North Carolina, with George Evans, successively Representative and Senator from Maine, one of the most eloquent men of his day, now almost forgotten. Of Mess dinners there was a continual interchange. Not confined to one particular party, they were as a rule very informal, though now and then a special effort was made in honor of the minister of some great power, some distinguished foreigner, or some pre-eminent statesman like John Quincy Adams, Clay, or Webster. Perhaps the most notable of these dinners at which Mr. Winthrop assisted during his first session was a friendly contest between North and South as to which could place on table the best old wine. Samuel L. Southard, Ogden Hoffman, and Moses Grinnell were hosts on this occasion, while the champion bottle-holder of the South was Isaac E. Holmes of Charleston. Fourteen famous varieties of Madeira (seven from each section) were produced and sampled, but the upshot was a unanimous and discreet decision to have another trial. Another noteworthy dinner — though in the ensuing extra-session, and not exactly a Mess dinner — was at Mr. Webster's at the time when

Tyler's tergiversation had so disgusted the Whig party, and when his cabinet had all resigned except Mr. Webster, who hesitated to relinquish the State Department before he could settle the Northeastern boundary question. The dinner was at what would now be considered the unearthly hour of four in the afternoon, and on his way to the dining-room Mr. Winthrop observed a one-horse carryall at the door, from which, to his great astonishment, emerged alone and unattended the small, spare form of President Tyler, who ascended the steps with an air of mingled perturbation and dejection. Upon Mr. Webster's attention being called to this circumstance he at once left the table, and, after an absence of nearly half an hour, was observed to conduct the President to his vehicle, and to administer to him what seemed to the guests at the window to be a consoling pat on the back. Mr. Winthrop always believed (though he did not know the fact) that Tyler had got wind of a supposed intention to resign on the part of the Secretary of State, that he had come on the spur of the moment to implore him to stand by him, and had received the assurance that no hostile step would then be taken. It need hardly be said that Mr. Webster's course in this matter excited marked differences of opinion among the Whigs. Among those who were represented as having urged him to resign were Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Saltonstall. This, however, was not the case. Their advice to him was to do whatever, in his judgment, would be for the best interests of the country; but they deprecated any reflection on his colleagues.

Mr. Winthrop made no formal speech in Congress

during his first winter, preferring not to seem to push himself forward. Moreover, though he enjoyed Washington society, he found that the climate disagreed with him and was ill for several weeks with a sort of acclimating fever. A little later he was called home by the sudden death of his aged father, whose last message of love to his absent son was the assurance that he had never once given him a moment's uneasiness. His first effort was made in the ensuing extra session, July 2, 1841, in the debate on the Distribution of the Public Lands, — followed, on the 28th of the same month, by a speech on the National Revenue, which is alluded to in the published diary of John Quincy Adams as "a very able argument." In the autumn he was active, as usual, in the State canvass. Even in Massachusetts Tyler's defection had greatly damaged the Whig party, concerning which, in his diary for November 5, Mr. Adams wrote: "It is splitting into a thousand fragments. Abbott Lawrence is struggling to sustain it, and Rufus Choate and Robert C. Winthrop and Leverett Saltonstall are haranguing Whig caucus meetings throughout the State, in vain, to support it. The general expectation is that Democracy will ride rough-shod over the whole country. The ambitious politicians are trimming their sails to the breeze. . . . Caleb Cushing has taken a lover's leap over to the Tyler territory and makes his court to the Lady Elizabeth." Not long after the re-assembling of Congress Mr. Winthrop delivered (Dec. 30, 1841) an elaborate speech on the Policy of Discriminating Duties, in allusion to which Mr. Adams wrote, "Mr. Winthrop's promise as an orator and debater in the House is of the highest order."

The next few months slowly developed a dark cloud on his domestic horizon. Mrs. Winthrop, who had been in excellent health during the first nine years of her married life, had latterly exhibited a delicacy of the lungs which created no alarm at the time, but which in the course of the winter enfeebled her to such an extent that she was removed in the spring from Washington to Boston, where she died, at the age of thirty-three, June 14, 1842, to the grief of all who knew her. In order to enable her husband to be with her in her last illness and at the same time not to lose a Whig vote in the House upon the important questions then pending, an arrangement was made by which Mr. Winthrop resigned his seat, which was filled by his friend Nathan Appleton, one of its former occupants, who retired in the following autumn, when Mr. Winthrop was again returned.

On the 20th of January, 1843, he read to the House an exhaustive Report — the most important ever made on that subject — on the Imprisonment of Free Colored Seamen in Southern ports, and five days later he made a speech on the Safe-keeping of the Public Moneys, contending that the Exchequer Bill then before the House ought not to be adopted, and taking occasion to reply to some recent attacks upon Mr. Webster, though he frankly confessed that he was not in accord with much that had fallen from the latter in his well-known speech at Faneuil Hall some months before.[1] In chroni-

[1] A speech described by J. Q. Adams, always severe upon Webster, as "bitter as wormwood to nearly the whole of the Whig party and sweeter than honey to the radical Democracy; boastful, cunning, jesuitical, fawning, and insolent; ambiguous in its givings out, avowing his determination not to let them know whether he intends to resign his

cling this Exchequer debate Mr. Adams says, "Three one-hour speeches were successively delivered by D. D. Barnard, R. C. Winthrop, and T. F. Marshall, all of the highest order of eloquence, though with irreconcilable dissent of opinions." This was a great compliment to the two first-named gentlemen, as Tom Marshall of Kentucky (as he was generally styled) had a great reputation for oratory. On the 12th of the following October, Mr. Winthrop made an elaborate speech in Faneuil Hall, which he entitled The Credit of Massachusetts Vindicated, and soon after the reassembling of Congress he had, on the 19th of December, a passage of arms with Henry A. Wise of Virginia on the subject of the President's Message.

In January, 1844, he addressed the House at length on the Right of Petition. His speech on this occasion has been often characterized as the leading authority on the parliamentary law of the question, and it was described by Mr. Adams on the day of its delivery as "an excellent one, but repeatedly interrupted by the addle-headed blunders of —— about a precedent from Hatsell in 1665." His peroration was as follows: —

Mr. Speaker, we ask for these petitions only that you will treat them as you treat other petitions. We set up for them no absurd or extravagant pretensions. We claim for them no exclusive or engrossing attention. We desire only that you will adopt no prescriptive and passionate course with regard to them. We demand only that you will allow them to go through the same orderly round of reception,

office or not, arguing all sorts of reasons for his retaining it, but intimating that he may perhaps release his grasp upon it; dealing open blows at the late Whig Convention for their resolution of total severance from John Tyler, and sly stabs at Clay and me, without naming either of us."

reference, and report, with all other petitions. When they have gone through that round, they will be just as much under your own control as they were before they entered on it. I heartily hope, sir, that this course is now about to be adopted. I hope it as an advocate of the right of petition. I hope it is as a Northern man with Northern principles, if you please to term me so. But I hope it not less as an American citizen with American principles; as a friend to the Constitution and the Union; as one who is as little disposed to interfere with any rights of other States as to surrender any rights of his own State; as one who, though he may see provisions of the Constitution which are odious in principle and unjust in practice, — provisions which he would gladly have had omitted at the outset, and gladly see altered now if such an alteration were practicable, — is yet willing to stand by *our Constitution as it is*, *our Union as it is*, *our Territory as it is!* I honestly believe that the course of this House in relation to these petitions has done more than all other causes combined to bring the Constitution into disregard and the Union into danger. Other causes have indeed co-operated with this cause. Your arbitrary and oppressive State laws for imprisoning our free colored seamen; your abhorrent proposal to annex Texas to the Union, in violation of the compromises of the Constitution, — yes, sir, of those very compromises on which Adams and Hancock met Jefferson and Madison (to use language recently employed on this floor); these laws and these proposals have unquestionably co-operated of late with the denial of the right of petition, in exciting in some quarters a spirit of discontent with our existing system. But this rule of the House has been the original spring of the whole feeling. And to what advantage on the part of those by whom it was devised? Have Southern institutions been any safer since its establishment? Have the enemies to those institutions been rendered any less ardent or less active by it? Has agitation on the subject of slavery in this Hall been repressed or allayed by it? Have

these petitions and resolutions been diminished in number under its operation and influence? No, sir, the very reverse, the precise opposite of all this, has been the result. The attempt of this House to suppress and silence all utterance on the subject of slavery has terminated as did the attempt of one of the kings of ancient Judah to suppress the warnings of the prophet of God. The prophet, we are told, took another roll and wrote on it all the words which the king had burned in the fire, and 'there were added besides unto them many like words!' And this always has been, and always will be, the brief history of every effort to silence free inquiry and stifle free discussion. I thank Heaven that it is so. It is this inherent and inextinguishable elasticity of opinion, of conscience, of inquiry, which, like the great agent of modern art, gains only new force, fresh vigor, redoubled powers of progress and propulsion, by every degree of compression and restraint; it is this to which the world owes all the liberty it has yet acquired and to which it will owe all that is yet in store for it. Well did John Milton exclaim, in his noble defence of unlicensed printing, 'Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, above all liberties,' — for in securing that, we secure the all-sufficient instrument for achieving all other liberties.

Having been privately warned by Mr. Webster that Tyler was bent on signalizing the close of his administration by an attempt to compass the annexation of Texas, Mr. Winthrop offered in the House (March 15, 1844) the following Resolution: —

Resolved, That no proposition for the annexation of Texas to the United States ought to be made or assented to by this Government.

Jacob Thompson of Mississippi objected to its reception, when Mr. Winthrop moved to suspend the

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rules, but was defeated by a vote of 122 to 40. Three days later he made what might be termed a rattling speech on the Oregon Bill, charging the Democratic party with being always ready to stir up prejudice against England for political purposes — with a habit of accusing every one who did not fall in with their policy of being under some sort of British influence — and with a disposition to make hatred of England a sort of standard of American patriotism. From this indictment, however, he excepted Mr. Calhoun, who had declared that the "crowning glory" of the recent Treaty of Washington was its establishing "permanent amity and peace" between the two nations.[1]

On the 16th of May he made a Report from the Committee on Commerce on the subject of American Seamen in Foreign Ports, and after the adjournment of Congress he was a frequent speaker in that disastrous Presidential campaign which ended in the defeat of the Whig candidate, to the consternation of his followers. "The stars in their courses," wrote Mr. Winthrop, "seem to be warring against us. First, Harrison's death, then Tyler's treachery, now Clay's defeat. Although my admiration for the latter had grown less ardent than of old, I still considered him the one man in the country who, all things considered, best deserved the Presidency. And now to have him beaten by a Polk! I dread in the near future foreign wars, with a marked increase of sectional irritation." Writing on the same subject thirty-six years afterward, he said: "The result of the election afforded the first ex-

[1] J. Q. Adams says this speech of Mr. Winthrop's was "off-hand," and that it made C. J. Ingersoll "eat his words."

ample, so often reproduced in later years, of the advantage enjoyed by a candidate who had said little, done little, and made few enemies, over one who has been constantly in the public eye, never shrinking from responsibility, and never failing to take a decided part in every controversy. No more serious discouragement to great abilities and great services as qualifications and recommendations for high office was ever experienced than in the preference given to Polk over Clay in 1844." He realized, however, that the immediate cause of Clay's defeat, the loss of the State of New York, was chiefly due to the exertions of the so-called Liberty party, who thus became, in his judgment, the indirect movers of the annexation of Texas and the Mexican War.[1]

In November, 1844, Mr. Adams records a long conversation with Mr. Winthrop concerning the latter's kinsman, George William Erving (between whom and himself had long existed a bitter feud which Mr. Winthrop was endeavoring to heal), adding, "I assured Mr. Winthrop, also, that my son would countenance no design or attempt to place him in competition with him, and that he would have my best wishes for his continuance in his present station as long as it would be agreeable to him and for his promotion to any other office of higher dignity and importance. He expressed much gratification at these assurances, but said he had determined not to serve in Congress after this next election." This last sentence requires explanation, as it is

[1] It may be remembered that J. Q. Adams said in his diary, "The electioneering of the Liberty party, from Birney, their head, down, is more knavish than that of either of the others."

so worded that a reader might suppose that Mr. Winthrop had intended to retire from Congress at the close of 1844, whereas the intention he expressed was not again to become a candidate *after the election then in progress*, which was for a term ending March 4, 1847. His reason for this decision (to which, as will be seen, he did not adhere) was that he had grown tired of Washington. In spite of its social attractions and in spite of his oratorical successes, he had felt lonely there since his wife's death, and the climate grew more and more distasteful to him, having a tendency to make him feverish. On the 6th of January, 1845, he made an hour's speech against the annexation of Texas, ending with the following paragraph : —

> I am against annexation now and always, — because I believe it to be clearly unconstitutional in substance; because I believe it will break up the balance of our system, violate the Compromises of the Constitution, and endanger the permanence of our Union; and, above all, because I am uncompromisingly opposed to the extension of domestic slavery, or to the addition of another inch of slaveholding territory to this nation.

On the 2d of February, 1845, he made a second speech on the Oregon Bill, which contained the following passages : [1] —

> No more negotiations! Why, Mr. Chairman, where is such a doctrine as this to lead us? Inevitably to war. To war with England now; to war with all the world hereafter,

[1] J. Q. Adams calls it "an excellent speech," and says it was "answered with brutality by Shepard Cary of Maine, and Andrew Kennedy of Indiana."

or certainly with all parts of the world with which we may have controversies of any sort, and even war can never put an end to the necessity of negotiation. Unless war is to be perpetual, you must come back to negotiation in the end. The only question in the case before us — the only question in the case of disputed international rights — is not whether you will negotiate or fight, but whether you will negotiate only, or negotiate and fight both. Battles will never settle boundaries between Great Britain and the United States, in Oregon or elsewhere. The capture of ships, the destruction of commerce, the burning and plundering of cities, will leave us just where we began. First or last, negotiation alone can settle this question. For one, then, I am for negotiation first, before war and without war. I believe that we shall get quite as much of Oregon in this way; and I know that we shall get it at less expense, not merely of money, but of all that makes up the true honor and welfare of our country. Sir, the reckless flippancy with which war is spoken of in this House as a thing to be 'let come,' rather than wait for the issue of negotiations, is deserving, in my judgment, of the severest rebuke and reprobation from any Christian patriot and statesman. I say let it not come, let it never come, if any degree of honorable patience and forbearance will avert it. I protest against any course of proceeding which shall invite or facilitate its approach. I protest against it in behalf of the Commerce of the nation, so considerable a part of which I have the honor to represent. I protest against it in the name of Morality and Religion, which ought to be represented by every member on this floor. . . .

I intend no disrespect to any gentleman who hears me; but as I have listened to the heroic strains which have resounded through this hall for some days past, in reference to the facility with which we could muster our fleets in the Pacific, and march our armies over the Rocky Mountains, and whip Great Britain into a willingness to abandon her pretensions, I have wished that some Philip Faulconbridge

were here to reply, as he does in Shakespeare's "King John," to some swaggering citizen of Angiers —

> —— Here 's a large mouth indeed,
> That spits forth death and mountains, rocks and seas;
> Talks as familiarly of roaring lions,
> As maids of thirteen do of puppy-dogs.
> He speaks plain cannon, fire, and smoke, and bounce!

And against whom are all these gasconading bravadoes indulged? What nation has been thus bethumpt and bastinadoed with brave words? I have no compliments to bestow on Great Britain, and am not here as her apologist or defender. But this, at least, I can say without fear of imputation or impugnment, that of all the nations in the world she is that nation which is able to do us the most good in peace and the most harm in war. She is that nation with whom the best interests of our country imperatively demand of us to go along harmoniously so long as we can do so with unquestioned right and honor. She is that nation a belligerent conflict with whom would put back the cause of human civilization and improvement more than it has advanced in a half-century past, or would recover in a half-century to come. Peace between Great Britain and the United States is not a mere interest of the two countries. It is an interest of the world, of civilization, of humanity: and a fearful reckoning will be theirs who shall wantonly disturb it. . . .

But then, Great Britain is so insolent and so aggressive that we can't help hating her. She is hemming us round on every side, the honorable member from Illinois[1] tells us, and we must make a stand against her soon, or we shall be absolutely overrun! How far, sir, will such a declaration bear the light of historical truth? It would seem to imply that the United States of America was the original civilized nation established on this continent; that Great Britain had subsequently made settlements in our neighborhood; and that she

[1] Stephen A. Douglas.

had systematically proceeded to environ us on all sides with her colonial possessions and military posts. This is certainly a new reading of American history. I have somehow or other obtained an impression from the schools that Great Britain once possessed almost the whole of this continent, or, at any rate, a very much larger part than she now enjoys. I have an indistinct idea that there was a day when she held dominion over almost all the territories in which we now rejoice. I have some dreamy recollection of having read or heard about stamp acts, and tea taxes, and Boston port bills; about Bunker hills, and Saratogas, and Yorktowns; about revolutions and declarations and treaties of Independence. And it is still my belief, Mr. Chairman, which fire will not burn out of me, that Great Britain has been deprived, within the last seventy years, of her most valuable possessions on this continent, and that instead of her hemming us in, we have thrust her out, and left her, comparatively speaking, a second-rate power in this Western hemisphere. She has not acquired one foot of soil upon this continent except in the way of honorable treaty with our own government since the day on which we finally ousted her from the limits of our Republican Union. Everybody knows that she acquired Canada by the treaty of 1763. We ourselves helped her to that acquisition. Not a few of the forces — not a few of the leaders — by which our own independence was achieved were trained up, as by a Providential preparation, for the noble duty which awaited them, in the war which resulted in the cession of Canada to Great Britain. Certainly we have no cause of quarrel with Great Britain that Canada is hers. But then, she has dared to think about Texas, she has cast some very suspicious glances at Cuba, and there is great reason to apprehend that her heart is at this moment upon California! True, she has formally denied to our own Government that she has any desire to see Texas other than an independent nation. True, she once conquered Cuba and gave it back to Spain by the treaty of 1763. True, she has given no outward and visible sign of any passionate

yearning for the further dismemberment of Mexico. But who trusts to diplomatic assurances? Who confides in innocent appearances? Has not the Chairman of our own Committee of Foreign Affairs [1] warned us that diplomatic assurances, like the oaths which formerly accompanied treaties, are the cheap contrivances of premeditated hostile action, and that the assurance of Great Britain with regard to Texas is but 'the ordinary harbinger of whatever it most solemnly denies'? Such a course of argument as this, Mr. Chairman, is certainly in one respect conclusive. There is obviously no mode of replying to it. Once assume the position that neither the words nor the deeds of Great Britain are to be taken in evidence of her designs, but that her assurances are all hollow and her acts all hypocritical, and there is no measure of aggression and outrage which you may not justly apprehend from her. But, sir, I boldly put the question to the consciences of all who hear me, — Of which of the two countries, Great Britain or the United States, will impartial history record that it manifested a spirit of impatient and insatiate self-aggrandizement on this North American continent? How does the record stand as already made up? If Great Britain has been thinking of Texas, we have acquired Louisiana; if Great Britain has been looking after Cuba, we have established ourselves in Florida; if Great Britain has set her heart on California, we have put our hand on Texas. Reproach Great Britain, if you please, with the policy she has pursued in extending her dominions elsewhere. Reprobate, if you please, her course of aggression upon the East Indian tribes, and do not forget to include your own Indian policy in the same commination. But let us hear no more of her encroaching spirit in this quarter. It is upon ourselves and not upon her that such a spirit may be more fairly charged. I say to the gentleman from Illinois, the peculiar champion of annexing Texas and occupying the whole of Oregon, *mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.*

[1] Charles J. Ingersoll of Philadelphia.

Finding that Indian slavery then existed in Oregon, as shown by public documents, and that there was nothing in the Bill to prevent the legalization of domestic slavery there, Mr. Winthrop then moved that "there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in this Territory except for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." This amendment was carried by a vote of 131 to 69, and differs only from the famous proviso subsequently brought forward by David Wilmot in that it applied to territory already belonging to the United States, and not to any which might thereafter be acquired.

The following extract from Sketches of the Twenty-eighth Congress, printed at this time in a Pennsylvania newspaper, gives some idea of the reputation he had now gained away from home: —

"Robert C. Winthrop is, by common consent, one of the ablest men in the House, and in a Whig Congress would not improbably be Speaker. Candid, honorable, and high-minded, he is above the tricks of intrigue, and every progressive step of his public life has been marked by increased evidences of intellectual power. As a speaker, he is clear, concise, and occasionally very eloquent. He speaks but rarely, but is always listened to with attention. He has an exceptionally fine voice, an impassioned manner, and a warm and brilliant imagination, which frequently lights up his speeches with gleams of bold and brilliant fancy. He is tall in stature, with the face of a scholar and serious thinker. With those who know him well, on both sides of the House, he is a great favorite, but the criticism has been made that he is a little too refined and dignified for some of his surroundings. A man of rougher temperament, even if less intellectual, is often better suited for a party captain."

III.

The manifest purpose of Tyler and Calhoun to procure the annexation of Texas had long excited great indignation in New England. On the 29th of January, 1845, a Convention of the People of Massachusetts opposed to such annexation had been held in Faneuil Hall, at which a Committee of Correspondence was appointed to confer in any emergency with persons in this or other States. This Committee, composed of three prominent Massachusetts Whigs, — Stephen C. Phillips, Charles Allen, and Charles Francis Adams, — issued on the 25th of June a circular letter containing the following passage: —

"If the annexation of Texas were already consummated; if it did not necessarily await the further action of Congress; if the voice of the People might not yet be heard in remonstrance against it, — we should feel that we could only consider and ask you to consider the last alternative of submission to a violated Constitution and the will of its violators, or *an effort to obtain, at whatever hazard,* that Constitutional guaranty of Liberty unalloyed with Slavery which alone can secure to the country of our Fathers the spirit and substance, and not merely the form, of a Republican Government."

With many expressions of opinion in this circular Mr. Winthrop cordially agreed, but the only interpretation he was able to place upon the words I have italicised in the above passage, and upon very similar expressions previously used in the Massachusetts Legislature and elsewhere, was that they amounted to a covert suggestion that under certain circumstances it might be well

for New England to secede from the Union because she could not have her own way, — a course to which Mr. Winthrop was unalterably opposed. From his point of view, the resistance of the North to any extension of the area of slavery should be a resistance within constitutional limits and upon the floor of Congress; and if the Democratic party should succeed in compassing the annexation of Texas, it would, in his judgment, be better to submit to it than to try to break the Union into fragments. As his father had left the Federalist party because he could not reconcile with loyalty to the Union the course of certain Federalist leaders at the breaking out of the War of 1812, so he, in turn, deprecated the possibility that a suspicion of disloyalty should now attach to Massachusetts Whigs. Having been called upon for remarks at the ensuing Fourth of July dinner in Faneuil Hall, he offered on that occasion the following toast: —

> Our Country, — Whether bounded by the St. John's and the Sabine,[1] or however otherwise bounded or described, and be the measurements more or less, — still our country, to be cherished in all our hearts, to be defended by all our hands!

This sentiment, long known as "Mr. Winthrop's however-bounded toast," though received with enthusiasm at the dinner just mentioned, subsequently gave rise to strong expressions of dissent in antislavery quarters, being stigmatized as neither more nor less than the revolting doctrine of "Our country, right or

[1] After the lapse of more than half a century it may perhaps be well to explain that the river Sabine was then the southwestern boundary of the United States; the river St. John being then, as now, its northeastern boundary.

wrong." In the opinion of its author, however, it breathed a spirit of exalted patriotism, and in after-life he always referred to it with peculiar satisfaction.

In the autumn of 1845 he made a variety of minor speeches, political and otherwise, besides delivering, on the 15th of October, at the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Boston Mercantile Library Association, a carefully prepared lecture on the Influence of Commerce, which attained a wide circulation in pamphlet form. Upon the reassembling of Congress he offered, on the 19th of December, the following resolutions in favor of arbitration: —

Resolved, That the differences between the United States and Great Britain, on the subject of the Oregon Territory, are still a fit subject for negotiation and compromise, and that satisfactory evidence has not yet been afforded that no compromise which the United States ought to accept can be effected.

Resolved, That it would be a dishonor to the age in which we live, and in the highest degree discreditable to both the nations concerned, if they should suffer themselves to be drawn into war upon a question of no immediate or practical interest to either of them.

Resolved, That if no other mode for the amicable adjustment of this question remains, it is due to the principles of civilization and Christianity that a resort to arbitration should be had; and that this government cannot relieve itself from all responsibility which may follow the failure to settle the controversy, while this resort is still untried.

Resolved, That arbitration does not necessarily involve a reference to crowned heads; and that, if a jealousy of such a reference is entertained in any quarter, a commission of able and dispassionate citizens, either from the two countries concerned or from the world at large, offers itself as an obvious and unobjectionable alternative.

Much disturbed at the warlike attitude so generally exhibited, he, a fortnight later (January 3, 1846), again advocated arbitration in a speech from which I quote several opening sentences: —

My venerable colleague [J. Q. Adams] and the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs [C. J. Ingersoll] have alluded to the course pursued by them last year and have told us that they both voted for giving immediate notice to Great Britain of our intention to terminate, at the earliest day, what has been called the Convention of Joint Occupation. Though a much humbler member of this House, I may be permitted to allude to the fact that I voted against that proceeding last year, and to add that I intend to do so again now. . . . I believe there exists no difference of opinion that if this unfortunate controversy should result in war, our country, and the rights of our country on both sides of the Rocky Mountains, are to be maintained and defended with all the power and all the vigor we possess. I believe there is no difference of opinion that in the state of this controversy at the present moment we owe it ourselves as guardians of the public safety to bestow something more than ordinary attention upon our national defences and to place our country in a posture of preparation for meeting the worst consequences which may befall it. . . .

I am aware that there are many by whom dissent from the extreme views which the Administration would seem recently to have adopted will be eagerly seized upon as an evidence of a want of what they call patriotism and American spirit. I spurn all such imputations in advance. Sir, the American spirit that is needed at the present moment, needed for our highest honor, needed for our dearest interests, is that which dares to confront the mad impulses of a superficial popular sentiment, and to appeal to the sober second thoughts of moral and intelligent men. . . . It is said, in some quarters, that it is not good party policy to avow such

doctrines; that the friends of the Administration desire nothing so much as an excuse for branding the Whigs as a peace party; and that the only course for us in the minority to pursue, is to brag about our readiness for war with those who brag the loudest. For myself, I utterly repudiate all idea of party obligations or party views in connection with this question. I scorn the suggestion that the peace of my country is to be regarded as a mere pawn on the political chess-board, to be perilled for any mere party-triumph. . . . No man, of ever so extreme opinions, has ventured yet to speak upon this question without protesting, in the roundest terms, that he was for peace. Even the honorable member from Illinois, who was for giving notice to quit at the earliest day, and for proceeding at once to build forts or stockades, and for asserting our exclusive jurisdiction over the whole Oregon Territory at the very instant at which the twelve months should expire, was as stout as any of us for preserving peace. My venerable colleague [Mr. Adams], too, from whom I always differ with regret, but in differing from whom on the present occasion I conform not more to my own conscientious judgment than to the opinions of my constituents and of a great majority of the people of Massachusetts, as I understand them, — he, too, I am sure, even in that very torrent of eloquent indignation which cost us for a moment the order and dignity of the House, could have had nothing but the peace of the country at heart. So far as peace, then, is concerned, it seems that we are all agreed. 'Only it must be an honorable peace,' — that I think is the stereotyped phrase of the day; and all our differences are thus reduced to the question, What constitutes an honorable peace?

Mr. Winthrop then proceeded with an elaborate argument, closing his remarks with the following paragraph: —

But while I am thus opposed to war for Oregon, or to any measures which, in my judgment, are likely to lead to war, I shall withhold no vote from any measure which the friends of the Administration may bring forward for the defence of the country. Whether the Bill be for two regiments or for twenty regiments, it shall pass for all me. To the last file, to the uttermost farthing, which they may require of us, they shall have men and money for the public protection. But the responsibility for bringing about such a state of things shall be theirs, and theirs only. They can prevent it if they please. The peace of the country and the honor of the country are still entirely compatible with each other. The Oregon question is still perfectly susceptible of an amicable adjustment, and I rejoice to believe that it may still be so adjusted. We have had omens of peace in the other end of the Capital, if none in this. But if war comes, the Administration must take the responsibility for all its guilt and all its disgrace!

On the 12th of March, 1846, he spoke at length, in Committee of the Whole, in favor of River and Harbor Improvements; and early in April he had two sharp parliamentary encounters, — one with Charles J. Ingersoll, who had charged Webster with being the pensioner of New England manufacturers, and with having misapplied the secret-service funds of the State Department; the other with William W. Payne of Alabama, who had attacked Massachusetts. The last-named passage of arms was thus described by an eye-witness in a letter to the "Baltimore Patriot": —

"A warm debate sprang up on a bill respecting the contingent fund, and some *carte* and *tierce* operations took place between Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Payne, which created quite a sensation. You must know that the former is one of the

most courteous gentlemen, as well as finished orators, in the House. You must also know that Mr. Payne is a large, not over-polished, blunt sort of man, who fears nobody, and says just what he chooses in anything but a pleasant voice or conciliatory manner. To-day he lashed himself into a storm similar to that which was raging at the time outside the Capitol, and aimed some ponderous blows at the New England States in general, and Massachusetts in particular, for aiding the enemy, etc., during the War of 1812. Mr. Winthrop replied with great spirit and eloquence, showing that Massachusetts furnished more and better men in the last war than any other State in the Union. Mr. Payne referred to a resolution of the Massachusetts Legislature, and asked Mr. Winthrop if he could point to a single instance where a citizen of the Southwest had turned traitor. Mr. Winthrop, with great energy and appositeness, exclaimed, 'I reciprocate the gentleman's inquiry.' As for himself, he added, he was hardly old enough to recall all the incidents of that war in his section of the country, but he well remembered clambering to a window-casement which overlooked Boston Common to see a parade of soldiers about marching to the defence of their country; and as to the resolution referred to, the gentleman from Alabama might be pleased to know that it had subsequently been *expunged*. The scene was a highly entertaining one, and all who witnessed it agreed that Mr. Winthrop did not come off second-best."

On the 25th of June, 1846, he made still another tariff speech, which he entitled The Wants of the Government and the Wages of Labor. Meantime the Administration had succeeded not merely in picking a quarrel with Mexico, but (with the aid of the Democratic majority of the House) in creating a schism in the Whig party. The little army of General Taylor being in great danger, a Bill was hurriedly introduced,

on the 11th of May, to authorize the employment of volunteers, and into this Bill was inserted in committee a preamble, stating that war existed "by the Act of Mexico." Every Whig in Congress believed that it existed by the Act of James K. Polk and William L. Marcy, but after vainly endeavoring to expunge the preamble, it was decided to vote for the Bill, preamble and all, rather than seem to refuse succor to a United States army in distress. The vote stood 174 to 14, the majority including such Northern Whigs as Samuel F. Vinton and Robert C. Schenck of Ohio, Robert C. Winthrop of Massachusetts, Solomon Foot and George P. Marsh of Vermont, William A. Moseley of New York, Joseph R. Ingersoll, James Pollock and Alexander Ramsay of Pennsylvania, with many others. The minority included John Quincy Adams and four other representatives from Massachusetts. That two Whig members from the Old Bay State, one of them so prominent a man as Mr. Winthrop, should, no matter under what circumstances, have accorded a qualified assent to war with Mexico, created a great outcry. He himself believed that the question was one on which it was impossible to give an altogether satisfactory vote, and concerning which conscientious men might well arrive at opposite opinions. "I have," said he at the time, "nothing but respect for the motives, and sympathy in the general views, of those of my colleagues who differed with me on this occasion."[1] Agencies for

[1] There is quite a literature to be consulted on this subject, and any reader who may be disposed to go into it at length would do well to look up a pamphlet by the late George Ticknor Curtis, entitled "Mr. Winthrop's Vote on the War Bill." See also the first volume of Wheeler's History of Congress, and a letter in Damon's Life of Abraham Lincoln,

the supply of press-cuttings did not then exist, and public men were often in ignorance of what was said of them, whether of praise or blame. It thus happened that it was not until long after the vote in question that Mr. Winthrop's attention was drawn to severe attacks upon him by an anonymous newspaper writer who was believed to be Charles Sumner. The latter was not one of his early friends, but they had seen a good deal of one another since Mr. Winthrop entered Congress, Mr. Sumner being one of his constituents and in the habit of writing from time to time on public questions. A difference of opinion between them had manifested itself more than a year before, when Mr. Sumner, in his Fourth of July oration on the "True Grandeur of Nations," had taken occasion, in denouncing war, to make a good deal of fun of the militia. Mr. Winthrop, on the other hand, had been in his day an enthusiastic militiaman, two of his elder brothers having commanded brigades and he himself a company. He fully believed the Massachusetts Militia to be not merely a bulwark of law and order, but a good training-school for young men; and he strongly deprecated passages in the oration, which Mr. Sumner consented to modify. Not to be outdone in frankness, the latter took occasion to confess that he had listened to Mr. Winthrop's "however-bounded" toast with a pang, and that he would have cut off his right hand rather than utter a sentiment which placed country above right.[1] This little interchange of criticism did not affect

who, though not a member of Congress of the time, fully approved the course pursued by the majority of the Whigs.

[1] He subsequently styled it "an epigram of dishonest patriotism."

their intercourse, and only a few weeks before the passage of the War Bill Mr. Winthrop had received a friendly letter from Mr. Sumner. He was therefore quite unprepared for what seemed to him the unaccountably virulent tone of these anonymous newspaper attacks, and, conceiving that both his words and acts had been misrepresented and perverted, he became very angry. Just at this time he received a letter from Mr. Sumner avowing the authorship of the articles, claiming that he had acted only in the conscientious discharge of public duty, asserting that persons of the highest consideration in Boston were of opinion that Mr. Winthrop "ought to be rebuked," but hoping that their pleasant relations might not be interrupted. These explanations, however well intended, did not appease Mr. Winthrop's wrath, and in the Appendix to the first volume of his "Addresses and Speeches" will be found a letter from him to Mr. Sumner, dated August 17, 1846, from which I quote a few sentences:

I am willing to believe that you have not weighed the force of your own phrases. Your *periculosa facilitas* has betrayed you. Your habitual indulgence in strains of extravagant thought and exaggerated expression, alike when you praise and when you censure, has perhaps impaired your discrimination in the employment of language. . . . I write for no purpose of returning railing for railing. I am quite ready to forgive the injury you have done me, and I shall wish you nothing but success and happiness in your future career. But were I to maintain relations of social intercourse (as you propose) with one who has thus grossly assailed my public morality, it would be an admission of the truth of one of the charges which has been arrayed against me in this case. It might fairly be construed into an acknowledgment

that I recognized different rules of action for my private and my political life. I feel compelled, therefore, to decline all further communication or conference while matters stand as they now do between us. I am conscious of having done nothing inconsistent with the cause of Freedom, of Right, of Humanity, of Truth, and even of Peace. I yield to no one in my attachment to one and all of those great interests. I am no stranger, either, to those Christian Churches from which one of your articles would seem to excommunicate me; nor do I know anything in my moral or religious character which should fairly subject me to be schooled, even by yourself. If by any vote I have given I have wounded the conscience of anybody else, I sincerely regret it. I certainly have not wounded my own conscience. . . . I ask no man to vindicate my vote, or to agree with me in opinion. I blame no man for charging me with error of judgment. But, knowing for myself that my vote was given honestly, conscientiously, with a sincere belief that it was the best vote which an arbitrary and overbearing majority would permit us to give, I shall allow no man to cast scandalous imputations on my motives and apply base epithets to my acts in public, and to call me his friend in private. My hand is not at the service of any one who has denounced it with such ferocity as being stained with blood.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that Mr. Winthrop's course in this matter may have been somewhat influenced by letters which he received in Washington from friends in Boston, who imputed to Mr. Sumner a secret thirst for office and accused him of a deliberate scheme to supplant Mr. Winthrop in the future. These representations may have done the subject of them great injustice. The last thing I should desire in a memoir like this would be to seem to cast reflections upon a very distinguished man who subsequently became a

member of this Society. It would, however, be an impossibility to deal with Mr. Winthrop's career, without briefly describing, from his own point of view, an unfortunate quarrel which became part of the political history of that period and was far-reaching in its consequences. Mr. Sumner's side of it will be found stated at length in the exhaustive Life of him by our associate, Edward L. Pierce, who, while warmly sympathizing with his hero, as it is only natural he should do, has yet exhibited towards Mr. Winthrop a marked degree of courtesy. With one remark of his I entirely agree, where he points out that the latter had "passed from his studies to public station, and was naturally more sensitive to criticism than if he had undergone the discipline and friction of a profession." No one at all intimate with Mr. Winthrop would have been disposed to deny that his temperament was a sensitive one, that his feelings could readily be hurt and his resentment sometimes be aroused, by a belief that he had been treated with unfairness. His participation in party warfare had been hitherto confined to encounters with the hereditary opponents of a Conservative. He now first experienced the sensation of a fire in the rear from his own ranks, — a fire renewed in succeeding years from very unexpected quarters. If he could not altogether conceal that he sometimes found it galling, he certainly tried hard to exhibit, upon some notable occasions, a degree of Christian forbearance not often met with in a politician.[1]

[1] As an instance of this, I may mention that Mr. Sumner had written him that his letter to the "Courier" had received "the entire approbation" of the editor, Joseph T. Buckingham. Mr. Winthrop's colleague, George Ashmun, who had voted against the War Bill, but who had

In consequence of the attacks then made upon him, he abandoned his former purpose of not being again a candidate for Congress, and accepted a new nomination in order that his conduct might be passed upon by his constituents. This time he had not merely a Democratic competitor to contend with, but also a candidate of the disaffected members of his own party, "Conscience-Whigs," as they were then often styled. The result was his triumphant return, the vote standing: Winthrop, 5,980; all others, 3,372.

In the canvass immediately preceding this election he preferred not to notice an open letter from Mr. Sumner to himself, dated Oct. 25, 1846, and circulated as a campaign document. It embodied the substance of the original charges and may be found in the collected works of its author. In an elaborate speech, entitled Whig Predictions and Whig Policy, delivered by him in the Whig State Convention in Faneuil Hall a few weeks earlier (Sept. 23, 1846) he made the following allusion to what had taken place: —

I do not forget that in regard to some incidental questions connected with this war there have been differences of opinion among friends at home, and differences of votes among friends at Washington. Upon these topics of controversy, however, I do not intend to touch. If anybody

regretted the tone of the letter in question, subsequently asked Buckingham why he had printed such offensive expressions. Buckingham replied that they were not in the copy approved by him, but were interpolated in the printing-room without his knowledge, and he forthwith wrote Mr. Winthrop in explanation, offering to produce the original proof with additions in Mr. Sumner's handwriting. Mr. Winthrop was urged to make Buckingham's letter public, but he declined to do so on the ground that Mr. Sumner must have forgotten that Buckingham did not see the revised proof, and that he had no wish to take advantage of a lapse of memory.

has come here, either by direct expression or by covert allusion, to cast imputations, to provoke collisions, or to stir up strife, I pass him by, with whatever respect other people may think him entitled to. We are assembled here to remember our agreements and not our differences. We have come here to reconcile all differences, and to do what we can to sustain and advance our common principles and our common objects. . . .

Sir, I trust there is no man here who is not ready to stand by the Constitution of the Country. I trust there is no man here who is not willing to hold fast to the Union of the States, be its limits ultimately fixed a little on one side, or a little on the other side, of the line of his own choice. For myself, I will not contemplate the idea of the dissolution of the Union in any conceivable event. There are no boundaries of sea or land, of rock or river, of desert or mountain, to which I will not try at least to carry out my love of country, whenever they shall really be the boundaries of my country. If the day of dissolution ever comes, it shall bring the evidence of its own irresistible necessity with it. I avert my eyes from all recognition of such a necessity in the distance. Nor am I ready for any political organizations or platforms less broad and comprehensive than those which may include and uphold the whole Whig party of the United States. But all this is consistent, and shall, in my own case, practically consist with a just sense of the evils of slavery; with an earnest opposition to everything designed to prolong or extend it; with a firm resistance to all its encroachments on Northern rights; and, above all, with an uncompromising hostility to all measures for introducing new slave States and new slave territories into our Union.[1]

In December, 1846, the merchants of Philadelphia entertained Mr. Webster at a formal public banquet,

[1] Henry Wilson characterized this speech as "able, adroit, and eloquent." See "Rise and Fall of the Slave Power," vol. ii. p. 119.

which Mr. Winthrop, then on his way to Washington, attended as an invited guest, but without expectation of taking any part. He was, however, called upon, and a correspondent of the "Boston Journal" paid him the following compliment: —

"Mr. Winthrop was exceedingly happy in his remarks. I have listened to him in Faneuil Hall and other places, but I never before heard him speak with such spirit, force, and eloquence. Alluding to Mr. Webster, he said Massachusetts could not claim him by birth, that honor belonging to New Hampshire; but there was honor enough in him for two States, — yes, enough for six and twenty States! When he closed, nine cheers were given, all standing, for Massachusetts and Winthrop!"

A few weeks later, on the 8th of January, 1847, he delivered a carefully prepared speech on the war with Mexico. In the course of it, after quoting a passage from the Writings of Madison, he continued as follows: —

Much has been said in the course of this debate about old-fashioned Federalism, but here are the doctrines of old-fashioned Democracy, in the very language of one of its ablest and most honored masters. And how strangely do they contrast with the manifestoes of that modern brood, which boast themselves so vaingloriously of their borrowed plumes! In which one of these golden sentences of James Madison do you find any justification of the idea that the Executive Department of the government is to be implicitly trusted in time of war, and that the vigilance of Congress is to suffer itself to be lulled asleep by the insipid opiate of a President's Message? What can be more emphatic than the declaration that 'those who are to conduct a war cannot, in the nature of things, be proper or safe judges whether a war ought to be

commenced, continued, or concluded'? Who can read these paragraphs without being deeply impressed by the sentiment which pervades them, that if the true spirit of Democracy calls upon us ever to be jealous, with an exceeding jealousy, of Executive power, it is when that power has been armed with the fearful prerogative of war, and when, as now, that prerogative is masked behind 'a symbol of peace'? If the Democratic sensibilities of James Madison were startled and shocked when George Washington, that 'prodigy of many centuries,' as he well entitled him, thought fit to forestall the deliberations of Congress by issuing a proclamation of neutrality, what would he have said had he lived to see a President 'such as may be expected in the ordinary successions of Magistracy,' not merely involving the country in war by his own arts, but proceeding to stigmatize as traitors all who may think fit to inquire into the causes of the war, or to judge for themselves whether it ought to be continued or concluded. . . .

As to the origin of the war, I shall say but few words. It should never be forgotten that its primary cause was the annexation of Texas, — a measure pressed upon the country, by its peculiar advocates, with the view of strengthening, extending, and perpetuating the institution of domestic slavery. Sir, I cherish no feelings of ill-will towards Texas. Now that she is a member of our Union, I should speak of her in the terms which belong to the intercourse of sister States. But I cannot fail to speak plainly in regard to the unconstitutional act of her annexation and the disastrous consequences which have thus far attended it. Who forgets the glowing terms in which the addition of that lone star[1] to our American constellation was heralded? How much of prosperity and of peace, of protection to our labor and of defence to our land, was augured from it! Who can now reflect on its consequences as already developed, who can think of the

[1] The Texan flag bore a single star, and she was often called the Lone Star State.

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deep wound which, in the judgment of many, it has inflicted on our Constitution; of the alienations and heart-burnings which it has produced among different members of the Union; of the fearful looking-for of disunion which it has excited; of the treasure it has cost and the precious lives it has wasted, in the war now in progress; of the poison it has in so many ways mingled with the previously healthful current of our national career, — who can reflect on all this without being reminded of another lone star, which 'fell from heaven, becoming as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters, and the name of the star is called Wormwood, and the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters because they were bitter.' [1]

After proceeding to denounce the unwarrantable acts of the Executive and maintaining that an honorable peace need involve no dismemberment of Mexico, he continued as follows: —

I am not about to depreciate the desirableness to the commerce of our country of a good harbor or two on the Pacific Ocean. If a strip of California could be added to our Oregon possessions, under proper circumstances and with the general consent of the country, I should be one of the last persons to object to it. But the idea that it is worthy of us to take advantage of this war to wrest it from Mexico by force of arms, and to protract the war until she will consent to cede it to us by a treaty of peace, I utterly repudiate. . . .

I have no time to discuss the subject of slavery on this occasion, nor should I desire to discuss it in this connection, if I had more time. But I must not omit a few plain words on the momentous issue which has now been raised. I speak for Massachusetts — I believe I speak the sentiments of all New England, and of many other States out of New England

[1] Revelation viii. 10, 11.

— when I say that, upon this question, our minds are made up. So far as we have power — constitutional or moral power — to control political events, we are resolved that there shall be no further extension of the territory of this Union subject to the institutions of slavery. This is not a matter to argue about with us. My honorable friend from Georgia [Mr. Toombs] must pardon me if I do not enter into any question with him whether such a policy be equal or just. It may be that the North does not consider the institution of slavery a fit thing to be the subject of equal distribution or nice weighing in the balances. I cannot agree with him that the South gains nothing by the Constitution but the right to reclaim fugitives. Surely he has forgotten that slavery is the basis of representation in this House. But I do not intend to argue the case. I wish to deal with it calmly but explicitly. I believe the North is ready to stand by the Constitution, with all its compromises, as it now is. I do not intend, moreover, to throw out any threats of disunion, whatever may be the result. I do not intend now or ever, to contemplate disunion as a cure for any imaginable evil. At the same time I do not intend to be driven from a firm expression of purpose, and a steadfast adherence to principle, by any threats of disunion from any other quarter. The people of New England whom I have the privilege to speak for, do not desire, as I understand their views — I know my own heart and my own principles and can at least speak for them — to gain one foot of territory by conquest, and as the result of the prosecution of the war with Mexico. I do not believe that even the Abolitionists of the North — though I am one of the last persons who would be entitled to speak their sentiments — would be unwilling to be found in combination with Southern gentlemen who may see fit to espouse this doctrine. We desire peace. We believe that this war ought never to have been begun, and we do not wish to have it made the pretext for plundering Mexico of one foot of her lands. But if the war is to be prosecuted, and if territories are to be

conquered and annexed, we shall stand fast and forever to the principle that, so far as we are concerned, these territories shall be the exclusive abode of freemen.

On the 22d of February, 1847, the Army Bill being under consideration in Committee of the Whole, Mr. Winthrop moved several provisos to the first clause in order to limit the control of the Executive over the appropriations, and he supported his views in a speech of some length, entitled the Conquest of Mexican Territory, from which I quote briefly as follows: —

I am ready now and at all times to unite in maintaining the National credit. I do not desire to see the evils of an odious war multiplied and aggravated by disordered finances and a bankrupt Treasury. If our armies are to be kept afoot, wherever they may be, and in whatever numbers they may be, I am for having money enough in the Treasury for feeding them, and clothing them, and paying them. I am for paying men, too, if possible, not with depreciated paper, but in a sound, redeemable currency. I desire to leave the Administration no apology or pretence for supporting our troops by a system of pillage and plunder in the enemy's country. There are purposes of peace, too, which require money. There are just debts to be paid, important establishments to be supported, cherished institutions to be maintained, noble charities to be administered; and the Treasury must be supplied to meet the requirements of them all. With these views I voted for the Loan Bill. I believed it to be a necessary provision for sustaining the public credit. . . .

I voted for the Three Million Bill because I wished to get the great principle which the proviso embodied fairly upon the Statute-book.[1] I believe it to be a perfectly constitutional principle and an eminently conservative principle. I believe that whenever the principle of this proviso shall be irrevoca-

[1] The Wilmot Proviso.

bly established, shall be considered as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, then, and not till then, shall we have permanent peace with other countries and fixed boundaries for our own country. . . . Much as I deplore the war in which we are involved, — deeply as I regret the whole policy of annexation, — if the result of these measures should be to engraft the policy of this proviso permanently and ineradicably upon our American system, I should regard it as a blessing cheaply purchased. . . . If we could at last lay down permanently the boundaries of our Republic ; if we could feel that we had extinguished forever the lust of extended dominion in the bosoms of the American people ; if we could present that old god, Terminus, of whom we have heard such eloquent mention elsewhere, not with outstretched arm still pointing to new territories in the distance, but with limbs lopped off, as the Romans sometimes represented him, betokening that he had reached his very furthest goal ; if we could be assured that our limits were to be no farther advanced, either by purchase or conquest, by fraud or by force, — then, then, we might feel that we had taken a bond of fate for the perpetuation of our Union. It is in this spirit that I voted for the proviso in the Three Million Bill. It is in this spirit that I offer the third proviso to the Thirty Million Bill before us. Pass them both; cut off, by one and the same stroke, all idea both of the extension of slavery and the extension of territory ; and we shall need neither the three millions nor the thirty millions for securing peace and harmony, both at home and abroad.

The third proviso then moved by Mr. Winthrop was as follows : —

Provided, further, That these appropriations are made with no view of sanctioning any prosecution of the existing war with Mexico for the acquisition of territory to form new States to be added to the Union, or for the dismemberment in any way of the Republic of Mexico.

It was defeated by a strict party vote of 124 to 76, the minority including Toombs and Stephens of Georgia with other Southern Whigs.

IV.

The Twenty-ninth Congress expired March 4, 1847, when Mr. Winthrop dismissed politics from his thoughts and made haste to sail for Europe, — a trip he had long had in view, but either domestic engagements or public duties had hitherto interfered with it. He had friends and relatives both in England and France, and he took with him flattering letters of introduction from Mr. Webster and Mr. Everett, which made his first experience of London society an exceptionally agreeable one. In a fragment of autobiography privately printed by him not long before his death and now to be found in many public libraries,[1] he gave some account of his intercourse with European celebrities at different periods, and it need only be mentioned here that among the persons of distinction of whom he was privileged to see a good deal in 1847 were the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, the poet Rogers, the historians Thiers, Mignet, Milman, Thirlwall and Hallam, Archbishop Whately, Bishops Wilberforce and Blomfield, Lord Lansdowne (then President of the Council) Lords Aberdeen and Stanley (both afterward prime ministers) Prince Louis Napoleon (then in exile in London), and King Louis Philippe, who twice received Mr. Winthrop informally at Neuilly.

[1] A Fragment of Autobiography. Reminiscences of Foreign Travel, by Robert C. Winthrop. Privately printed, 1894.

He had hardly returned home before he was called upon to attend the Whig State Convention at Worcester on the 29th of September, where a vigorous effort was made by the Conscience-Whigs to commit the party to a positive pledge to support no Presidential candidate who was not openly opposed to the extension of slavery. From Mr. Winthrop's point of view, the only practical effect of such a platform would have been to make a breach in the Conservative party as a national organization, thereby facilitating the election of a Democratic President, certain to be more obnoxious than any Southern Whig. In the debate which ensued, the amendment was ably advocated by Charles Francis Adams, Allen, Sumner, and others, while Mr. Winthrop was almost alone in opposition to it.[1] He was obliged to speak more than once and with great earnestness, but in the end he carried his point. Rarely satisfied with his own productions and generally feeling that he might have done better, he took some pride in his speeches at this Convention, as they were delivered on the spur of the moment, with no previous preparation. Finding them very inadequately reported, he intended to write them out for future publication, but an accumulation of business resulting from his absence abroad caused him to postpone doing so until too late, to his subsequent regret. Just before the State election he made a campaign speech in Faneuil Hall in which he took occasion to refer as follows to what had happened the year before: —

I am glad to find myself once more standing face to face with so large a body of my constituents. At our last annual

[1] His near connection, John Chipman Gray, a former Vice-President of this Society, actively supported him.

election I was myself a candidate for your suffrages, and agreeably to the old custom (whether more honored in the breach or in the observance, I leave you to judge) I took no part in the canvass. I cannot but remember that on that occasion I was something more than a candidate. I was on trial, — a prisoner at the bar, I had almost said; arraigned before the country, if for no very high crimes, at least for what were stigmatized in some quarters as very grave misdemeanors, — a toast on the 4th of July, and a vote on the 11th of May. These were the indictments, and political death was the penalty, and this is the first opportunity I have had of making my acknowledgments, my profound and hearty acknowledgments, for the signal verdict you rendered in my favor. I would not prolong or revive the memory of that controversy, or of any other controversy which may have occurred earlier or later between those professing to be real Whigs. I, sir, have treasured up no malice, no hatred, and no uncharitableness against those who differed from me. Heaven forbid that the time should come in New England, or within a thousand miles of New England, when the conduct of candidates may not be fearlessly canvassed and their misconduct boldly condemned. But meeting my constituents for the first time since then, and standing upon the very threshold of the duty to which they have again called me, I cannot avoid making this passing allusion to their constant kindness. I may add, however, that I am unable to indulge in any ecstatic emotion of delight at having been, for the fourth time, returned to Congress; for while I shall always feel it to be an honor to represent the city of Boston, yet I see nothing to cause me to anticipate peculiar pleasure in taking part in the national legislature in the present state of parties and of the country. I see only discouragement, difficulty, and embarrassment ahead.

The Thirtieth Congress came into being on the 4th of March, 1847, but did not assemble until December. The Whigs had in it a small majority more apparent than

real, as three Northern members (Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio, Amos Tuck of New Hampshire, and John G. Palfrey of Massachusets), though still counted as Whigs, were not likely to vote for any candidate whose views on the slavery question did not satisfy them, while it was apprehended that several Southern Whig members whose districts were close might not be willing to vote for a supporter of the Wilmot Proviso, for fear of losing their seats. The Whig candidate for speaker in the preceding Congress had been Samuel F. Vinton of Ohio, — a man so generally esteemed by his associates that his renomination was almost a matter of course, unless his age and health should compel him to decline. In this latter event the person most prominently mentioned for the succession was Mr. Winthrop, and after him Caleb B. Smith of Indiana, afterward Secretary of the Interior in the first Cabinet of President Lincoln. Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Vinton had long been intimate. After the death of Mr. Saltonstall, Mr. Vinton was the member of the House whom Mr. Winthrop most frequently consulted upon public affairs and Mr. Vinton had voted for him for Speaker in 1845. They both reached Washington by the 1st of December, and on the 4th Mr. Winthrop wrote a friend as follows: —

You may hear stories about my having said this, that, or the other, but the truth is I have said nothing and done nothing, having only called on those who have called upon me, and spoken to those who have spoken to me. To Vinton, however, I have talked freely. He will feel complimented by a nomination, but has no idea of running, being good enough to say I ought unquestionably to be Speaker. Whether I shall be, is very doubtful. Our majority is narrow, and while

I am not enough of an antislavery man for some of our Northern friends, I am too much of a Wilmot Proviso man for some of our Southern ones. Indeed, Democratic newspapers are now holding me up as 'little better than an abolitionist,' an epithet which ought to mollify Giddings, who, I am told, boasts that he can and will defeat me. The bitterness attributed to him where I am concerned is hardly to be accounted for by our political differences in recent years, and I imagine I must have trodden on his toes without knowing it.

Mr. Winthrop then kept a hurried, irregular diary, the following brief entry in which relates to his nomination: —

Saturday, Dec. 4. In the evening to the caucus. Vinton nominated on first ballot. He declined with a very handsome allusion to me. On the second ballot I had 57 votes to 25 for Smith. Accepted in a few simple words.

The next day the following correspondence passed between Mr. Winthrop and one of his Massachusetts colleagues: —

53 Coleman's, Washington,
Dec. 5, 1847.

Dear Sir, — It would give me pleasure to aid by my vote in placing you in the Chair of the House of Representatives. But I have no personal hopes or fears to dictate my course in the matter, and the great consideration for me must be that of the policy which the Speaker will impress on the action of the House. Not to trouble you with suggestions as to subordinate points, there are some leading questions on which it may be presumed that you have a settled purpose. May I respectfully inquire whether, if elected Speaker, it is your intention:

So to constitute the Committees of Foreign Relations and of Ways and Means as to arrest the existing war;

So to constitute the Committee on Territories as to obstruct the legal establishment of Slavery within any Territory;

So to constitute the Committee on the Judiciary as to favor the repeal of the law of Feb. 12, 1793, which denies trial by jury to persons charged with being slaves; to give a fair and favorable consideration to the question of the repeal of those Acts of Congress which now sustain Slavery in this District; and to further such measures as may be in the power of Congress to remedy the grievances of which Massachusetts complains at the hands of South Carolina, in respect to ill treatment of her citizens.

I should feel much obliged to you for a reply at your early convenience, and I should be happy to be permitted to communicate it, or its substance, to some gentlemen who entertain similar views to mine on this class of questions. I am, dear sir, with great personal esteem,

Your friend and servant,

JOHN G. PALFREY.

WASHINGTON, COLEMAN'S HOTEL,
Dec. 5, 1847.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter of to-day has this moment been handed to me. I am greatly obliged by the disposition you express 'to aid in placing me in the Chair of the House of Representatives.' But I must be perfectly candid in saying to you that, if I am to occupy that chair, I must go into it without pledges of any sort. I have not sought the place. I have solicited no man's vote. At a meeting of the Whig members of the House last evening (at which, however, I believe that you were not present) I was formally nominated as the Whig candidate for Speaker, and I have accepted that nomination. But I have uniformly said to all who have inquired of me that my policy in organizing the House must be sought for in my general conduct and character as a public man.

I have been for seven years a member of Congress from our common State of Massachusetts. My votes are on record. My speeches are in print. If they have not been such as to inspire confidence in my course, nothing that I could get up for the occasion, in the shape of pledges or declaration of purpose, ought to do so. Still less could I feel it consistent with my own honor, after having received and accepted a general nomination, and just on the eve of the election, to frame answers to specific questions like those which you have proposed, to be shown to a few gentlemen, as you suggest, and to be withheld from the great body of the Whigs. Deeply, therefore, as I should regret to lose the distinction which the Whigs in Congress have offered to me, and through me to New England, for want of the aid of a Massachusetts vote, I must yet respectfully decline any more direct reply to the interrogatories which your letter contains. I remain, with every sentiment of personal esteem,

Your friend and servant,

ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

The election took place on Monday, December 6, the first vote being as follows: —

Whole number of votes cast	220
Necessary for a choice	111
Robert C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts (Whig)	108
Linn Boyd, of Kentucky (Democrat)	61
Robert McClelland, of Michigan (Democrat)	23
John A. McClernand, of Illinois (Democrat)	11
Scattering (including the votes of the four candidates just mentioned)	17

An analysis of this vote shows that six members, then classed as Whigs, did not vote for Mr. Winthrop, three from each section of the Union, the Northern ones being Giddings, Tuck, and Palfrey, the Southern ones

William M. Cocke of Tennessee, John W. Jones of Georgia, and Patrick W. Tompkins of Mississippi. On the second vote, Jones of Georgia wheeled into line, and Tompkins of Mississippi, though he could not bring his mind to support the candidate of his party, consented not to vote at all.[1] The result was that Mr. Winthrop, who on the first vote was three votes short, now needed but one. John Quincy Adams then sent George Ashmun to Palfrey to ask him to abandon further opposition. "If," said the venerable ex-President, "I can vote for Mr. Winthrop with a clear conscience, I should suppose Dr. Palfrey could." Ashmun reported that Palfrey was rather non-committal, but expressed some hope that, in the end, Amos Tuck would not suffer the Speakership to go to a Democrat. Whether this conjecture was well founded is immaterial, as, a few moments later, the election was decided by an unexpected circumstance. The clerk had begun to call the roll for the third time, when a Democratic member, Isaac E. Holmes of South Carolina, arose, and, draping himself in one of the long cloaks then in fashion, marched solemnly out of the hall, disregarding the whispered remonstrances of several of his neighbors. One less vote was therefore required to constitute an election, and Mr. Winthrop was declared Speaker. Holmes had long been one of his particular friends, and was fond of describing himself as an "Independent Jeffersonian," upon whom party ties were not always binding. He was probably influenced quite as much by dislike of Mr. Giddings as by regard for Mr. Winthrop; and in a published letter to his constituents he

[1] Cocke of Tennessee made no sign, and was perhaps paired.

vindicated his action substantially on the ground that he had defeated the machinations of Abolitionists to control the organization of the House. Another Southern friend of Mr. Winthrop, Carrington Cabell of Florida, a Whig, was bitterly attacked by Democratic newspapers in his district for voting for "the Abolitionist Winthrop;" but, fortunately for himself, he was able to show that the Democratic Speaker of the previous Congress (John W. Davis of Indiana) had given similar votes, upon the Wilmot Proviso and the Right of Petition, to those for which a Whig Speaker was now denounced. I am particular to mention the precise circumstances of this nomination and election because they are described with more or less inaccuracy in various works of reference. Not to refer to writers of less note, two very distinguished ones give quite contradictory accounts of what occurred: Henry Wilson stating, on the authority of Isaac E. Holmes, a Democrat, that "the Southern Whigs opposed to the Wilmot Proviso nominated Mr. Winthrop in caucus in opposition to a majority of the Northern Whigs, who were in favor of the Wilmot Proviso and who opposed the nomination of Mr. Winthrop;"[1] while James G. Blaine, on the other hand, says, "Robert C. Winthrop was nominated in the Whig Caucus over Samuel F. Vinton of Ohio because he had voted for the Wilmot Proviso and Mr. Vinton against it. Mr. Vinton was senior in age and long senior in service to Mr. Winthrop, and the decision against him created no little feeling in Whig circles, especially in the West."[2]

[1] The Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America. By Henry Wilson, vol. ii. p. 27.

[2] Twenty Years of Congress, 1861–1881. By James G. Blaine, vol. i. p. 72.

Mr. Winthrop had always supposed that, of the fifty-seven votes received by him in the caucus, at least as many came from the North as from the South, though, except in a few cases, he was not sure who voted for him; and he was much taken aback that he should be accused, some seven and thirty years after the event, of having supplanted his friend Vinton. Through a mutual friend he pointed out to Mr. Blaine that he had only received the nomination after Vinton had been nominated and declined, that he had owed the nomination more to Vinton than to any one man, and that an examination of the "Congressional Globe" would show that Vinton had again and again voted for the Wilmot Proviso. Mr. Blaine expressed polite regret for his mistake, which he ascribed to an incorrect account of the caucus which he had met with in a newspaper of that period.[1]

Mr. Winthrop had a pronounced taste for Scriptural quotations, and his short address on taking the chair as Speaker contained the following passage: —

> In a time of war, in a time of high political excitement, in a time of momentous national controversy, I see before me the representatives of the people almost equally divided, not merely as the votes of this morning have already indicated, in their preference for persons, but in opinion and in principles, on many of the most important questions on which they have assembled to deliberate. May I not reasonably claim, in advance from you all, something more than an

[1] In the sixth volume of the second series of this Society's Proceedings, pp. 72–76, will be found some reminiscences by Mr. Winthrop of men with whom he had been intimate in Congress, more particularly of Samuel F. Vinton, together with an allusion to Mr. Blaine's statements upon this and other subjects.

ordinary measure of forbearance and indulgence, for whatever inability I may manifest in meeting the exigencies and embarrassments which I cannot hope to escape? And may I not reasonably implore, with something more than common fervency, upon your labors and upon my own, the blessing of that Almighty Power whose recorded attribute it is that 'He maketh men to be of one mind in a house'?[1]

A week later he wrote a friend: —

Nobody can exaggerate the labor and anxiety to which I have been subjected. If I had been invested with the entire patronage of the Presidency, I could not have been teased and solicited more incessantly. Boys who want to be pages, women who want to sell apples, men who want to be clerks, have surrounded me at every turn. Orphans and widows have clustered around me like bees, and where they could extract no honey, have left a sting. But the assignment of committees has been the hardest work I ever did in my life. In order to get through with it in season, I more than once locked myself into my study with a confidential clerk from noon till midnight, and now that I have fairly thrown off the mountain, I have the discomfort of knowing that I have dissatisfied not a few of my friends and probably all my enemies. Indeed, there is no such thing as fully satisfying one's self in the solution of such a problem. Aside from the difficulty of reconciling geographical claims, there have been personal embarrassments. One of them was what to do with J. Q. Adams. Of late years he has declined to serve on committees; but this year, perhaps because his own party is again in power, he has signified no such purpose. The only place adequate to his dignity and experience was the Chairmanship of Foreign Affairs, but his views are so peculiar that, in the

[1] An amusing discussion took place with reference to this quotation. Some newspaper writers, unable to find it in the Bible, imagined that they had caught Mr. Winthrop tripping. It is from the 68th psalm in the Psalter of the Book of Common Prayer.

existing condition of the country, I was afraid to risk it. Then came the question what to do with our excellent crony, Joseph R. Ingersoll. He has been first of the Whig minority of Ways and Means, but his views as to the duty of sustaining the war are so unqualified that, if I had made him Chairman, I should have seemed to favor further invasion of Mexico. I have given this post to Vinton, and I think wisely, but Toombs, as you may imagine, is a little disgruntled at the preference. Then that good fellow, Hugh White, wished to be on the Ways and Means, but I could not leave the city of New York unrepresented on a committee which deals with such great financial and commercial interests. Then our friend Jacob Collamer wished to be Chairman of the Judiciary, but this interfered with my disposition of Ingersoll. The whole business has been as intricate as a Chinese puzzle, and it would require many sheets of foolscap to give you half my reasons. I am truly sorry the North Carolina Whigs feel slighted, but I fully supposed Shepperd would be best pleased by having little or nothing to do. The only man who has a right to feel placed below his desert is Grinnell, who most kindly and generously declined being considered for a Chairmanship. I should have been glad to have heaped coals of fire on Palfrey by assigning him to something better, but I could not accomplish this without seeming to give undue preference to Massachusetts.

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the composition of these committees. It is enough to say that while Mr. Giddings broadly charged that they "were all arranged in such a manner as to effect the political objects which he [Mr. Winthrop] had in view," Mr. Toombs, on the other hand (after his quarrel with Mr. Winthrop in 1849), maintained that they were characterized by gross unfairness to the South. A particularly sharp controversy arose over the Committee on the District of

Columbia, Mr. Toombs complaining that it consisted of five Northern members to four Southern ones, and Mr. Giddings attacking it as a committee in the interest of the South, one of the Northern members, as he asserted, being practically a slaveholder. The allusion was to a colleague of his own from Ohio, Thomas O. Edwards, who forthwith proceeded to denounce Mr. Giddings in print as a deliberately untruthful person, and claimed that his (Edwards's) relation to slavery had been similar to that of James G. Birney and John G. Palfrey, both of whom had inherited slaves and manumitted them. The whole matter is summed up, with a degree of fairness unusual in a political opponent, by our associate Pierce, who says:—

> The explanation of Palfrey's opposition to Winthrop at Washington, and Sumner's and Adams's in Massachusetts, is that they regarded him then, as they regarded Webster later, as the great obstruction to the antislavery movement in the State. Winthrop, aside from what may be said on the slavery question, made one of the best speakers who ever filled that eminent chair; and even the antislavery men were not entirely agreed that he did injustice in his appointments of committees by which questions concerning slavery were to be considered. Horace Mann thought him fair in this respect. . . . At this distance from the controversy which left many stings behind, and after trying to judge it fairly, this may be considered a just conclusion: Winthrop was placed in the chair by his party as a whole, by the votes of Southern as well as Northern members, and could not be expected to discriminate between them; but all that could be expected was that he should hold the balance fairly between the conflicting forces within his party. He was not, and did not pretend to be, a Free-Soiler, — not even a Whig

who had made opposition to slavery paramount; and while it was right for Palfrey to question him, it was equally his right, even his duty, to make no private pledges as to his action as Speaker.[1]

The dissatisfaction of extremists with some of his committees was not the only fault found with Mr. Winthrop at the outset of his Speakership. It was for a moment cast into the shade by a local grievance. The Capitol was then under the joint authority of the Vice-President and the Speaker, each controlling their respective halves of the building, in the basement of which had gradually been established two eating and drinking saloons, frequented alike by Congressmen and by the public, and not infrequently the scene of disgusting inebriety. Mr. Winthrop was by no means a rigid Puritan. He habitually drank wine at dinner. He was no stranger to the occasional use of whiskey for the stomach's sake, and he thoroughly enjoyed tobacco in the form of cigars until he was eighty-five years old. But he detested the convivial habit of gathering around a public counter to partake of spirits between meals, believing it to be the most prolific cause of intemperance. One of his first official acts was to close the bar under the House wing, — a course freely commended by judicious persons, but which gave rise to much private grumbling, including not a few letters of remonstrance from members of both parties.

In a recent work of Miss Follett, published under the auspices of our associate, Professor Hart,[2] are to be found

[1] Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner, vol. iii. pp. 151, 152.

[2] The Speaker of the House of Representatives. By M. P. Follett. New York, 1896.

various anecdotes connected with Mr. Winthrop's Speakership, which were told by him to the author in old age and are more fully recorded in his note-books. I will not take up space by repeating them, though it may be well to refer in passing to one relating to precedence, then, as ever before and since, a burning question in Washington society. Mr. Winthrop was personally of opinion that a strict adherence to hierarchical order was all very well for State ceremonials, but that a considerable degree of latitude in such matters was apt to contribute greatly to the pleasure of informal social intercourse. John Quincy Adams and Thomas H. Benton, however, took him to task for his laxity, maintaining that, as third officer of the Nation, he should never yield the *pas* to, or call first upon, any one but the President and Vice-President. Mr. Winthrop suggested that as the Secretary of State (Buchanan) was nearly twenty years his senior, and Chief Justice Taney well-nigh old enough to be his grandfather, an exception might now and then be made in their favor. "On no account," almost shrieked Mr. Adams, who was in one of his excited moods; "Cabinet officers and Judges of the Supreme Court are the mere creatures of the Executive. *We* are the Representatives of the People, and you, for the time being, our official head. It will not become you to forget it."

Under date of Jan. 17, 1848, he wrote in his diary:

I am at a loss to know what course to take to repel a specific charge of Mr. Giddings which I found, only the other day, in a Ohio newspaper which was sent me anonymously, but which, I am told, has been repeatedly copied into other papers. In the course of a letter of several columns he de-

liberately asserts that 'on the morning on which war was declared, at a meeting of the Whig members of Congress, Mr. Winthrop seized upon the first opportunity to speak in favor of voting for the war, and advised the whole party to sustain the bill declaring war, which it was expected would be presented at the session of that day.' Now I never heard of such a meeting before, never attended such a meeting, nor made any such speech. I am willing to believe Giddings intends to speak the truth, but his intense prejudices have led him into some strange hallucination or confusion of memory after the lapse of a year and a half. At my request a few of my colleagues came this evening to consult with me on this subject. There were present Joseph Grinnell, Charles Hudson, Daniel P. King, Artemas Hale, and Amos Abbott. They all bear me out in contradicting this and other assertions of Giddings, but it is thought hardly consistent with my dignity as Speaker to take any notice of them at present. An opportunity may arise hereafter, and in the mean time evidence can be taken.[1]

On the 21st of January, 1848, he wrote his friend Kennedy, who was engaged on a biographical notice of him for the "Whig Review": —

One word as to this thirty-day immortality I am to receive under your auspices. The Sumner-Giddings fraternity are trying hard to convince my Northern and Western friends that I am false to Northern principles, a truckler to Southern dictation, and a principal and constant supporter of this

[1] Mr. Giddings subsequently quoted E. D. Culver of New York, a former member of the House, who said he was present at a caucus on the morning of May 11, 1846, and that he "thought" Robert C. Winthrop, Washington Hunt, and Samuel F. Vinton made speeches at it. In reply, Hunt and Vinton denied having been present, Hunt adding that he was then absent from Washington. John W. Houston of Delaware remembered such a caucus, but stated that it was thinly attended, and that he had a distinct recollection that Mr. Winthrop was not present.

abominable war. Sumner is striking his lyre to this tune in the Boston Courier and Giddings has written verbose epistles to his constituents on the same subject. Meantime, certain Southern Whigs are defending their votes for me by letters containing here and there unintentional inaccuracies. Holmes, for instance, unaccountably presents me as an anti-Wilmot-Proviso man, while Cabell (though his letter is generally excellent) has set down one or two matters in a way to do a little injustice to my views. The long and short of all this is that, as my votes are on record and my speeches in print, I am anxious to be presented by you in my real character; i. e., as an opponent of the war, as neither false to the North nor to the South, but as uniting with that sense of the evils of slavery which is common to the Free States, that respect for the Constitution and the Union which would infringe on no right of the Slave States. *Sat verbum.* You would be greatly edified by some of the newspapers I find in my mail. 'This Winthrop,' says a Western Loco-foco print, 'is the fellow who sold himself to the South last year, by voting against the Wilmot Proviso.' 'The Wilmot Proviso,' cries a Southern sheet, 'call it not so, but rather *the Winthrop Proviso*, for Mr. Winthrop moved it two years before Mr. Wilmot thought of it!'

In spite of his long experience as a presiding officer, both as Speaker in the Massachusetts Legislature and as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole in Washington, his new duties proved somewhat more laborious than he had expected, partly owing to the complexity and conflict of the Rules and Orders then existing, and partly to the election of a Clerk of the House who saw fit to remove the experienced assistants accustomed to look up precedents at a moment's notice, thereby obliging the Speaker to attend to his own duties and look

after the clerks besides. What he liked best about his office was the opportunity it afforded him for increased hospitality. He had hardly been elected before he took a house, engaged a French cook, and began to give two large dinners a week, with smaller ones as occasion served. From boyhood he had been accustomed to meet at his father's table the principal persons in New England, together with all distinguished strangers who passed through Boston, and it was a genuine pleasure to him — a pleasure which never palled — to assemble around his own board not merely the celebrities of Washington society, but his associates in Congress of all shades of opinion. For convenience he kept lists of his guests, and the recurrence on them of names like Clay, Webster, and Calhoun was a matter of course; but there is a single entry of a name destined in process of time to outshadow all the rest, that of the "lone star of Illinois" as he was sometimes called, he being then the only Whig in the delegation from that State. Mr. Winthrop was not one of those, if any there were, who discerned in Abraham Lincoln at that period the promise of exceptional fame; but he liked him personally, finding him shrewd and kindly, with an air of reserved force. The greatest man then in the House, as admitted by those who liked him least, was John Quincy Adams, with whom Mr. Winthrop's intercourse, in spite of some differences of opinion, had been frequent ever since he entered Congress. On the 19th of February, 1848, he recorded in his diary: —

> Passed part of the evening with Mr. Adams. He was particularly kind and cordial, full of reminiscences of his early life.

Two days later, the old man, like another Chatham, fell on the floor of the House, and, on the evening of the 24th, died in the Speaker's room in the Capitol. Mr. Winthrop's official announcement of his death was short, but impressive. I quote a single sentence: —

> Whatever advanced age, long experience, great ability, vast learning, accumulated public honors, a spotless private character, and a firm religious faith could do to render any one an object of interest, respect, and admiration, they had done for this distinguished person; and interest, respect, and admiration are but feeble terms to express the feelings with which the members of this House and the people of this country have long regarded him.

In a note-book he wrote not long after: —

> There have been, I confess, moments in my life — perhaps not a few — when John Quincy Adams has seemed to me the most credulous, prejudiced, and opinionated of mortal men. As a rule, however, he either endeared himself to me by his attractive conversation, or electrified me by his energy and eloquence.[1]

The Presidential possibilities of 1848 had long been an engrossing topic of conversation. Mr. Winthrop was decidedly of opinion that in the existing condition of public affairs the Democrats would win an easy victory should the Conservative nominee prove to be Clay, Webster, or Judge McLean. The only chance for the Whigs, in his judgment, was to run an untried man, one whose name would excite popular sympathy outside of politics. His personal preference was for General Scott, with whom he had grown intimate during his

[1] He was of opinion that Massachusetts had not adequately honored the memory of Mr. Adams, a statue of whom should, he thought, have been made a *pendant* to that of Webster in front of the State House.

residence in Washington, but he realized that the enthusiasm aroused by General Taylor's Mexican campaign rendered him a safer candidate. With the latter his acquaintance was then slight, but he had formed a high opinion of his patriotism and unselfishness. Out of regard for Mr. Webster, however, he refrained from any public expression of his views, and declined in advance to be elected a delegate to the Philadelphia Convention. From time to time he noticed that his own name figured as a possible candidate for the Vice-Presidency on the Taylor ticket, but he considered this idle newspaper-gossip until, in the latter part of January, John S. Pendleton of Virginia came to him to offer the unanimous support of the delegation from that State if he would consent to the use of his name. This proposition Mr. Winthrop at once declined, on the ground that it would be sound policy for the friends of General Taylor not to couple him with any particular man at the outset, but rather to leave the Vice-Presidency open until the last moment for different candidates to hang their hopes upon. In giving this advice, he made a single exception, expressing the opinion that if Webster could then be persuaded to waive his claims and take the second place, a Taylor and Webster ticket would afford the best assurance of victory.[1]

On the 12th of May, 1848, Mr. Winthrop wrote in his diary: —

Thirty-nine years old to-day! I have rarely entered on a new year with less spirit or in worse health. Spring always

[1] If this arrangement could have been effected, Webster, as it turned out, would have had nearly three years in the White House. Mr. Winthrop thought him ill advised at this period, and that in grasping at the shadow, he missed the substance.

brings with it for me a certain degree of debility and depression, and this Spring has brought twice its usual load. The old elasticity and the old ambition seem to have gone out of me, and this at an age when some men are just entering public life. My doctor, as usual, is trying tonics, but there is a verse in the Psalms which does me more good than a hundred nostrums: 'Wait on the Lord; be of good courage; He will strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.'

The corner-stone of the National Monument to Washington was laid in the capital, with appropriate exercises, on the 4th of July, 1848.[1] The orator of the day was to have been John Quincy Adams, after whose death Mr. Winthrop was appointed. His address was much admired at the time, and is still familiar to readers of commemorative literature, though he himself was not wholly satisfied with it.

I was sensible [he wrote] that I was making a strong impression, and my voice held out wonderfully; but there is a want of breadth and body to the oration which nobody realizes more than the author. The truth is that, what with the intense heat and my duties in the Chair, its preparation has been a case of *invita Minerva* from beginning to end.

Shortly afterward, he addressed a private letter to the Chairman of his Ward and County Committee, expressing his earnest wish to retire from the representation of Boston at the expiration of his Speakership (March 4, 1849) and requesting that some one else

[1] An odd instance of the inaccuracy of modern works of reference is to be found in a statement in more than one of them that the illness and death of President Taylor followed closely his attendance upon these exercises. In point of fact, the President who took part in them was James K. Polk, and General Taylor was not within a thousand miles of Washington.

should be nominated in the autumn. The most urgent appeals were made to him to reconsider this decision. It was represented to him by Nathan Appleton, and other friends whom he had long been in the habit of consulting, that it was not for the interest of the party to make a change when a general election was pending and when differences of opinion were certain to arise as to his fittest successor. With a good deal of reluctance, he consented to submit the matter to the Nominating Convention in October, agreeing to run again if, as proved to be the case, this should be their urgent and unanimous wish, — subject to an understanding that he should be at liberty to resign later if he saw fit.[1] On his return home after the adjournment of Congress, he preferred not to accept the offer of a public dinner, and did not think it consistent with his office to take an active part in opening the campaign, but he expressed his views with clearness and conciseness in a letter declining an invitation to address a meeting in New York: —

The Whigs of the Union [he wrote] can elect General Taylor President of the Republic, if they will. They can elect nobody else. The only other result they can accomplish is the success of General Cass. If any of them see fit to adopt the latter of these two alternatives, they may denounce whom they please as being no true Whigs; they will convict nobody but themselves. As the fairly selected nominee of the National Convention, in which the Whig party, the whole Whig party, and nothing but the Whig party, was represented, General Taylor is in my judgment entitled to the support of all who recognize party organization. As an avowed Whig, — none the less likely to be a true Whig, a firm Whig, or a

[1] For correspondence on this subject see Addresses and Speeches of Robert C. Winthrop, vol. i. pp. 627-629.

wise Whig, because he has confessed himself not to be an ultra Whig, — he has a right, as I think, to the support of all who have voluntarily united in a Convention which has declared him its candidate. But, as an honest man of spotless character, sterling integrity, strong sense, indomitable courage, tried patriotism, and just principles, he has far higher claims upon us all. I believe him to be all this, and more than all this. We have had some touches of his quality which cannot be mistaken. Under him I believe we shall have a peaceful, virtuous, patriotic, and Constitutional Administration. And if any accident should befall him (which Heaven avert!) your own Millard Fillmore will carry out such an administration to its legitimate completion. I congratulate you on the prospect before us. Nothing throws a cloud or a shadow on it but our own momentary dissensions, and these will rapidly vanish into thin air.

The "dissensions" thus alluded to arose from the dissatisfaction manifested in different parts of the country by friends of Clay and Webster. The attitude of those two illustrious statesmen at this juncture was a grief to Mr. Winthrop, to whom it seemed greatly lacking in magnanimity. They each had undoubted reason to be chagrined at the preference accorded to a successful soldier; but from Mr. Winthrop's point of view, the ridding of the country of the incubus of a Democratic administration was the real duty of the hour, and all individual ambitions, however justifiable at other times, should have given way to it. As he had considered Webster ill advised in the beginning in not allowing his name to be associated with that of Taylor, so now the disparaging remarks attributed to the former concerning the latter seemed even more injudicious. If, instead of finally according a tardy and

lukewarm support to Taylor's candidacy, he had advocated it generously at the outset, he would beyond a doubt (so Mr. Winthrop thought) have been offered the Secretaryship of State and with it an unrivalled opportunity of service to his country, to say nothing of an escape from the Senate before the debates on the Compromise. As matters stood, a local schism was threatened, Mr. Webster's immediate supporters (mostly in and about Boston) becoming known as "Webster Whigs," while the main body of the party in the State, headed by Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Winthrop, were often styled "Massachusetts Whigs."

The Free-Soilers naturally availed themselves of this breach, and endeavored to widen it by insinuating that some of Mr. Webster's friends had not been loyal to him. Party feeling then ran very high, and in moments of excitement good men said strange things, one man of note asserting on the stump that, more than a year before the Philadelphia Convention, he had heard Mr. Winthrop, at his own table in Washington, propose a toast to General Taylor as the fittest candidate for the Presidency. Mr. Winthrop fortunately possessed a list of his dinners, and on writing to the other guests on the occasion in question, they all denied that anything of the sort had taken place; whereupon the accuser admitted that he might have confused the dinner with one given by another person.

Mr. Winthrop made a few speeches while the election was pending; one of them in September, at the Whig Convention in Worcester, another at Faneuil Hall in November, the night before the general election, when he divided the applause with Mr. Choate. They were

largely *extempore*, and finding them inadequately reported he undertook to write them out for future publication, which he never accomplished. Many years afterward he learned for the first time that his Worcester speech had received high encomium from Abraham Lincoln, who was among his auditors.[1] In his remarks at Faneuil Hall he made no allusion to the fact that he was for the fifth time a candidate for the representation of Boston, but at the ensuing Congressional election, he received a majority of 3,930 over the combined vote of his competitors, one of whom was Charles Sumner.

I insert here a few extracts from private letters written by him after the reassembling of Congress: —

[Dec. 11, 1848.] I have just read a new falsehood about myself, but it is only new in the species, not in the genus. The 'Union,' copying from the 'Philadelphia Evening Bulletin,' says I am represented as having made a speech, at the supper to Truman Smith in New York, proclaiming what the North would do about slavery. Now I was not present at this supper, nor did I attend any meeting, deliberative or festive, on my way to Washington, nor have I ever expressed any such sentiments. I think I shall stamp this lie publicly, for I have so often allowed such things to pass current that some people seem to think they can soil me with impunity. . . . As to newspaper suggestions of my going into the Cabinet, or to London, the former I should not care for, and the latter will end in smoke, as things in London are apt to do. The very rumor of such a likelihood would defeat it, there are so many conflicting claims. Besides the one you

[1] Mr. Lincoln's own speeches in Massachusetts during this canvass have been strangely neglected by his biographers, perhaps because the language he indulged in with reference to the Free-Soil party, though characteristically humorous, was the reverse of complimentary.

mention, I have good reason for thinking that Everett would not be indisposed to return to England, and I could not consent to be brought into competition with one who is not merely my personal friend, but my superior in age, in ability, and in accomplishments. The chances are that the Administration will think a single slice of so rich a loaf as the London mission enough for any man. In any case, however, I wish my friends to know that I have never had the smallest understanding with Taylor's immediate supporters that anything should be offered me, though I am aware Giddings charges that a bargain was made long ago by which old Zack was to be President and I Speaker.

[Dec. 21.] You will have noticed in different papers some amusing bits of Cabinet-making, one, in particular, in which I figure as Postmaster-General (Heaven forefend!) As a bit of mosaic it reminded me of the invited guests at Webster's table on Tuesday last. 'Mr. Winthrop,' said the Godlike[1] on my arrival, 'be good enough to sit opposite me, with General Dix and General Caleb Cushing on your right and left. I will take Mr. John Van Buren and Mr. Prescott Hall on my right and left, and Mr. Reverdy Johnson and the other guests can intersperse themselves on either side.' So we sat, true Whigs and mongrel Whigs, Free-Soilers and Cassites, in a room hardly big enough to breathe in, but the unaccountable non-appearance of Caleb seriously impaired the variety of the entertainment. We had a good time, however, Webster making up for the medley of his company by the richness and fulness of his conversation. . . . The solicitations, personal or by letter, of a thousand seekers of minor offices have begun to make my life a burden to me. The state of things is already worse than after Harrison's election, and what it will be by the fourth of March Heaven only knows. It is a melancholy exhibition, and the worst feature

[1] Elderly readers may remember that one of Daniel Webster's most popular nicknames was "the Godlike Dan."

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of our political system. By the way, I was last night the guest of honor at a banquet given by citizens of Washington to members of the Thirtieth Congress. I will send you my remarks in print, though they do not amount to much.

[Jan. 20, 1849.] I have long felt that the best hope of ridding this country of slavery, if this great consummation is ever to be achieved, lies in clearly establishing the principle that emancipation by the Government against the will of slave-owners must be accomplished by just compensation, and that the national resources must defray the cost. The doctrine of Giddings strikes at this whole idea of property to be paid for, and the entire South is thus rallied blindly against anything in the nature of concession. If a pecuniary arrangement could be effected by which all negroes born after 1876 could be declared free, another half-century would see the evil removed. Begin where you will in the solution of the great problem of Abolition (I mean, of course, anywhere but in insurrection and revolution) and Compensation must go hand-in-hand with Emancipation. It is this view which takes away the idea of selfishness from Northern philanthropy. If we agree to unite with the South in bearing the burdens and defraying the cost of Abolition, we make it a matter of joint interest, in regard to which our voices may fairly be heard. I fear the day is distant when anything will be done, and meantime a spirit of Agitation at one end of the Union, and of Dissolution at the other, grows apace.

[Feb. 11.] A week ago I was confidentially informed, and am now at liberty to mention privately to you, that Taylor's purpose was to offer me the State Department in case Clayton should make up his mind to decline it, he having at the outset some idea of retaining his seat in the Senate. In the present state of the country I had rather have had the compliment than the office, and I am glad Clayton decided to accept, though I should have liked it better still if Webster could have had it, which was, I suppose, out of the question.

Furthermore, it has been intimated to me that if I had a particular fancy for the Navy Department, it might 'perhaps' be arranged. I replied I had no such fancy. Indeed, with my dislike of the Washington climate, it would be full of horror to me to be cooped up in a bureau signing all sorts of papers connected with naval administration, — a subject about which I know little and care less. Moreover, I greatly question the expediency of passing over Lawrence unless he is otherwise provided for. He has rendered important service to the party and came very close to the nomination for Vice-President. I have said repeatedly that he would make a good Secretary of the Treasury, and I do not see the force of some objections which have been raised to this.

V.

The second winter of Mr. Winthrop's Speakership ended in a political storm. The condition of things had been critical for some time, and on the last night of the session the tempest broke out. The House had passed territorial bills with an antislavery restriction, but the Senate first laid them on the table and then foisted into the General Appropriation Bill a provision for territorial governments without any such restriction. The House non-concurred, and a conference was called for. Toombs and Stephens urged Mr. Winthrop to appoint to this Committee men who would favor a concurrence with the Senate, which Mr. Winthrop positively declined to do, and made his appointments according to his own convictions of duty. The night was spent in agitation and confusion, in the course of which the Speaker was constrained to call Mr. Toombs by name and order him to

his seat, — a step taken with much reluctance, as the offender, though occasionally wrong-headed, was a man of commanding intellect and one for whom Mr. Winthrop had a real regard. The clock had been put back; and when the sun rose on the morning of Sunday, March 4, 1849, he had been in the chair the greater part of twenty hours. In describing what took place, Horace Mann wrote: —

"There were two regular fist-fights in the House and one in the Senate. Some members were fiercely exasperated, and had the North been as ferocious as the South, or the Whigs as violent as the Democrats, it is probable there would have been a general mêlée. But all this depends upon the *men*. I walked round the House a number of times, conversed with all the Southern slaveholders whom I knew, and, by introduction, with some I had not known, and had not an uncivil word. At last, at seven this morning, Mr. Winthrop made an elegant farewell address in answer to a vote of thanks, and we all *ran*." [1]

This vote of thanks was moved by a Democrat, Ex-Governor James McDowell of Virginia, who paid the customary acknowledgment, at the close of a Congress, to the "able, dignified, and impartial" manner in which the Speaker had presided over their deliberations. The words were hardly out of his mouth when Andrew Johnson of Tennessee moved that the word "impartial" be stricken out of the resolution, charging Mr. Winthrop with having been unfair to the South, not merely in the appointment of committees, but in his habitual awards of the floor. Fourteen members supported

[1] Life of Mann, p. 277.

Johnson on division, but as Mr. Winthrop was not present and as there was no roll-call, he did not learn precisely who they were, but was told they were a curious admixture of Democrats, Free-Soilers, and disaffected Southern Whigs. Shortly afterward he wrote: —

> Toombs is not likely to forgive what happened, particularly as he has lashed himself into a sort of fury over the idea (which I think he honestly entertains) that Southern rights and Southern property are in danger. It will not surprise me if he rallies enough followers of the extreme type to defeat my re-election next December. Our majority (if we have one) will be so narrow that a slight defection would turn the balance. For myself, I care little. I suppose I may say without vanity that I have made some figure in the chair, but I could hardly hope to increase my reputation by presiding for a second term over such a hornet's nest as the House has now become. I lament, however, the possibility of a Democratic Speaker in the present condition of the country. The funny part of the matter is, that if Toombs succeeds in pushing me from my stool, Giddings, *more suo*, will at once claim the credit of it and boast to his constituents that it was *he* who killed Cock Robin.

On the following day it became Mr. Winthrop's official duty to escort to the Inauguration at the Capitol both the incoming and retiring Presidents. At the former's desire he called for him some time in advance in order to explain a few matters of ceremonial, the General having modestly mentioned that he had been but once inside the Senate-chamber, and then only as a spectator in the gallery. This was the first occasion when Mr. Winthrop had seen him alone, and he was much impressed by his simplicity of character, combined

with evidences of earnest, patriotic, resolute purpose. He dwelt with frankness upon his want of familiarity with the public men of the country and the great disadvantage this had been to him in the selection of his advisers. He added, however, that he had been quite a reader of debates in Congress, and that to his appreciation of several of Mr. Winthrop's speeches was due the wish he had originally formed to have him in his Cabinet. In reply, Mr. Winthrop paid a compliment to Mr. Clayton, but took occasion to express the hope that a way might be found to bring Mr. Webster into full accord with the Administration. Some days later, William W. Seaton, Mayor of Washington, and an intimate friend both of the President and himself, came to him privately and said: "The General is bothered to death by pressure for office, both direct and indirect. He would like to offer you the mission to London, but Clayton is of opinion that it would be for the interest of the party if you could be persuaded to stay in Congress, and, in any case, he prefers to keep the foreign appointments in abeyance for the present. If, however, you will suffer me to go to the General and tell him from you that the post would be particularly agreeable to you, I think this can be arranged forthwith. Otherwise, it may eventually go to —— or ——." Mr. Winthrop positively refused to send such a message, on the ground that he had always made it a rule of conduct never to ask for anything, and that he was very sensitive to imputations of self-seeking. Tempting as was the prospect held out, he had grave doubts whether it was not his duty to stay at home and devote personal attention to his children, of whom, since their

mother's death, he had been able to see comparatively little. After thinking the whole matter over carefully, he sat down and wrote a friendly note to Clayton, suggesting that it might relieve the Administration from embarrassment if it were distinctly understood that he was not a candidate for any office in its gift. This done, he returned with a clear conscience to Boston, where he occupied himself with an accumulation of private business and with the preparation of several non-political addresses he had promised to deliver, — one, in particular, on the life and public services of his great-grandfather, Governor James Bowdoin, for whose character and career he had a profound admiration and many of whose papers he had inherited. Later in the summer he presided over the Phi Beta Kappa dinner at Cambridge, and recruited his health by a tour of watering-places, at one of which an event occurred which changed the current of his life, and is best described by a passage in one of his letters:

[Sept. 7, 1849.] Have pity on me. I went to Newport about four weeks ago free and unshackled. I met there a widow with one little boy. I had known her when she was a girl, and had been intimate with her husband, so it was not unnatural we should sympathize. Suffice it to say, I returned ten days ago a bondman, and to-day it is publicly announced that I am going to be married. The worst of it is that I am unable to deny it. My only consolation is that the lady — to one eye at least in the world — is a very charming person, not too young for a man who was made a Doctor of Laws day before yesterday, and one of the most thoroughly amiable women under the sun. I shall soon send you an invitation to a great occasion. Meantime give my best regards to Mrs. Kennedy and tell her I have always taken her as the pattern

of my matrimonial needs, and that I hope I have come almost up to the sample. Only think of my forgetting the name. Laura Welles, formerly Laura Derby, a niece of that beautiful Mrs. Richard Derby of the past, whose portrait you may remember. One of her sisters married Rev. Ephraim Peabody, and a cousin is the second wife of our friend Appleton. I preached at Bowdoin College an hour and three quarters by the clock. A crowded audience sat through it patiently, and some of them were even good enough to say I did well. You shall judge for yourself when the pamphlet is out.

The marriage took place on the 15th of October, and put new heart into Mr. Winthrop, who was a man of domestic tastes, greatly dependent upon a cheerful home. He forthwith took a larger house in Washington, though with little expectation of being re-elected Speaker. The contest for that office lasted nearly three weeks, no less than sixty-three separate votes being taken, besides many incidental ones on different subjects, the whole interspersed with much acrimonious debate, — Andrew Johnson taking the opportunity to renew his attacks upon Mr. Winthrop, and declaring that while only fifteen members had actually opposed the vote of thanks of the previous March, forty-five others had sat quietly in their seats without voting, rather than acquit the Speaker of unfairness to the South. It is unnecessary to describe all that took place, but, in view of the inaccurate or disingenuous accounts which have appeared in some works of reference, it is desirable to call attention to a few facts. The roll was first called (Dec. 3, 1849) with the following result: whole number of votes cast, 221; necessary to a choice,

111; Howell Cobb of Georgia, Democrat, 103; Robert C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, Whig, 96; scattering, 22. An analysis of the scattering votes shows: Free-Soilers, 9; Independent Northern Democrats (Peck of Vermont, Cleveland of Connecticut, Doty of Wisconsin), 3; Independent Southern Democrats (Holmes and Woodward of South Carolina), 2; Independent Northern Whigs (Campbell and Crowell, of Ohio), 2; Disaffected Southern Whigs (Toombs, Stephens, and Owen, of Georgia, Cabell of Florida, Hilliard of Alabama, Morton of Virginia), 6. When the twenty-first vote was reached, Mr. Cobb's support had greatly fallen off, while Mr. Winthrop's had increased to 102, his gradual gain of six being due to the arrival in Washington of two belated Whigs, to the adhesion of one Free-Soiler (Howe of Pennsylvania), and to the wheeling into line of the two Independent Northern Whigs above mentioned, and a single disaffected Southern Whig (Hilliard). The figure 102 proved to be Mr. Winthrop's high-water mark, which he repeatedly attained, but never exceeded. Not long afterward, the Democratic managers thought it good policy to drop Cobb for the time being and run a Northern Democrat. They concentrated first on Emery D. Potter of Ohio, and then on William J. Brown of Indiana. The latter was a dark horse who developed surprising speed, creeping up on the thirty-ninth vote to 109, out of a total of 226. Mr. Winthrop had all along offered to retire in favor of some other Whig if it would help matters, but his principal supporters had hitherto strenuously objected, on the ground that this would only make bad worse. At this juncture, however, Robert C. Schenck of Ohio and Edward Stanly

of North Carolina came to him and said: "We have good reason to suspect Brown of double-dealing, of having secretly pledged himself to both Southern men and Free-Soilers. To gain time to expose him, you must now resign, and we will make this a pretext to force an adjournment," — a plan which was at once carried out. The next morning the required evidence was not forthcoming, and on the fortieth vote Brown got 112, needing but two more to elect him. Just then the cat was let out of the bag, in the shape of a letter from Brown agreeing to appoint committees satisfactory to the Free-Soilers, in return for their eventual support. This discovery caused much excitement, and a revulsion of feeling. Had a vote then been taken, and had Mr. Winthrop been still the Whig candidate, it is probable that he would have been chosen. As it was, the House adjourned, and the next day the Democrats precipitated an angry debate. For some time after, both parties scattered their votes, ultimately reverting to the original nominees. A variety of compromises were advocated, among others the amusing one that Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Cobb should draw lots for the Speakership; but in the end it was agreed that, instead of a majority, a plurality should determine. Before this new rule went into operation, Stanly of North Carolina, Conrad of Louisiana, and Houston of Delaware labored hard with the five recalcitrant Southern Whigs, pointing out to Toombs and Stephens in particular that Taylor, a Southern man and a slave-owner, had been their original choice for President, and that, by conniving at a Democratic Speaker, they were giving the administration a set-back at the outset,

besides inflicting a profound and perhaps irreparable injury upon the Whig party. There was some little wavering, but the iron will of Toombs (much the ablest of the phalanx) held fast his associates, though, as the result showed, if even four of them could have been won back to their allegiance, Mr. Winthrop would have been elected.[1] The sixty-third and final vote (Dec. 22, 1849) was as follows: Cobb, 102; Winthrop, 99; scattering, 20; this scattering vote consisting of nine Free-Soilers, two Independent Northern Democrats, two Independent Southern Democrats, and the five disaffected Southern Whigs just alluded to.[2]

In view of all this, it is a little surprising that in the "History of the Rebellion," published by Mr. Giddings in 1864, and in other equally trustworthy works of reference, the statement should be made that Mr. Winthrop owed his defeat to "his devotion to the interests of slavery." That such an impression, however, was widely current at the time in certain circles would seem established by the following paragraph from a leading abolition newspaper: —

"That lickspittle of slavery, Robert C. Winthrop — a doughface of showy but mediocre ability, the self-satisfied and self-sufficient agent of the wealth of Boston — has fallen under the wheels of the bright car of Liberty. Thanks be to Heaven for this victory, small as it is!"

[1] In justice to these four gentlemen, it should be stated that their opposition was entirely courteous, and they expressed regret that they could not conscientiously vote for one whom they personally liked.

[2] It should be added that neither in this, nor in many of the preceding votes, did either party poll its full strength, there being several pairs. Pairs, however, do not affect a result. In this last vote Mr. Winthrop lost the support of the one Free-Soiler who had hitherto voted for him (Howe), but the gap was made good by Tuck of New Hampshire, who then voted for him for the first time.

In an eloquent speech in Congress on the 13th of December (listened to by the writer of this memoir), Mr. Toombs had said: —

"I do not act with them [the Whigs] because the events of the past, the present, and the future force the conviction on my mind that the interests of my section of the Union are in danger, and I am therefore unwilling to surrender the great power of the Speaker's chair without obtaining security for the future."

In a subsequent letter of explanation to his constituents he went more into particulars, as follows: —

"When Congress met, in December, I found there was a strong and nearly unanimous disposition on the part of Northern Whig members to interpolate the old Whig creed with Free-Soil opinions. The same disposition strongly manifested itself also among Northern Democrats, though not to the same extent. Four years' experience in Congress had taught me the importance of the organization of the House to the success or defeat of public measures. After a free, full, and unsatisfactory conference in caucus with the Northern Whigs, I determined not to co-operate with them in the election of Speaker, without some security upon the slavery question. I found them, with but few exceptions, pledged and determined to engraft the Wilmot Proviso upon Territorial bills for the government of New Mexico and Utah, and to abolish slavery in the district of Columbia. A resolution submitted by me to the caucus in opposition to the passage of any such laws was promptly rejected, and I, together with those who acted with me, as promptly withdrew from the caucus and resisted, by all means in our power, the election of its nominee, Mr. Winthrop. The struggle for the Speakership resulted in the election of a representative from our own State, whose able and efficient administration of its duties has thus far been highly honorable and beneficial."

Aside from his gratitude to the political friends who had stood by him so manfully in this contest, Mr. Winthrop was pleased that Horace Mann, between whose opinions and his own there was something of a gulf, should not only have steadily voted for him from first to last, but have endeavored (so he was informed) to persuade others to do so. Many years later he read with interest the following extracts from Mann's letters on this subject: —

[Dec. 22. 1849.] "I have voted for Mr. Winthrop and in that way have fulfilled the hopes of the Whigs. He was their first choice; he is only my second or third: yet, as he is the best man we could possibly elect, I have supported him. Just so much undeserved credit as I get from the Whigs, just so much undeserved censure I shall get from the Free-Soilers."

[Dec. 23.] "Howell Cobb is Speaker, one of the fiercest, sternest, strongest, proslavery men in all the South. . . . And by whom was he allowed to be elevated to this important post? By the Free-Soilers, who, at any time during the last three weeks, might have prevented it, and who permitted it last night when the fact stared them full in the face. Mr. Winthrop was not unexceptionable, it is true; but what a vast difference between him and an avowed champion of slavery, with all the South at his back to force him on, and at his ear to minister counsel! How strange that love of a good thing which destroys it! Now we shall have proslavery committees. All the power and patronage of the Speaker, and it is great, will be on the wrong side; and this has been permitted by those who clamor most against all forbearance toward slavery, when by a breath they might have prevented it."[1]

It is not essential to recount the part taken in debate

[1] Life of Mann, pp. 283–284.

by Mr. Winthrop for a month or two after he returned to the floor. It is all to be found in the "Congressional Globe." His first speech of real importance was delivered on the 21st of February, 1850, and was entitled Personal Vindication. While he continued to be a candidate for Speaker, he had preferred not to be drawn into any discussion of his conduct; but he had always intended to take some opportunity to defend himself, and an occasion was furnished by a fresh attack, this time from Joseph A. Root of Ohio (a former Whig, then an active Free-Soiler), who accused Mr. Winthrop and others of having "skulked" a particular vote.[1] In replying to Mr. Root he was able to deal with previous assailants and at some length. "I have no expectation," he more than once remarked in his old age, "that my political career will excite the smallest interest in the distant future, but I should be glad if any one curious in such matters would turn to this particular speech and read it from beginning to end." I give a few extracts to convey some idea of its flavor: —

It appears to have been the studious policy of a few members of the House to drag me into the debate, whether I would or no. Not satisfied with having accomplished my defeat as a candidate for re-election to the Speaker's chair, they have made it their special business to provoke and taunt me by unworthy reflections upon my political and official conduct; and more than one of them has not scrupled to assail me with the coarsest and most unwarrantable personalities. It is my purpose, sir, at this moment to notice some

[1] The "Globe" has it "dodged," but Mr. Winthrop, who was listening to a debate in the Senate at the time, was informed that the word really used was "skulked."

of these unmannerly assaults; and no one will be surprised, I think, if I should be found doing so in no very mincing or measured terms. Hardly had I reached the capital before I found myself held up, at the length of three or four columns, in the Democratic organ of this city, as a desperate Abolitionist. The Abolition papers, in reply, exhibited me at equal length, as indeed they had often done before, as a rank pro-slavery man. The honorable member from Tennessee [Mr. Andrew Johnson] coming next to the onslaught, and doing me the favor to rehearse before my face a speech which he had delivered behind my back at the last session, arraigned me in the most ferocious terms as having prostituted the prerogatives of the Chair to sectional purposes, and as having framed all my committees in a manner and with a view to do injustice to the South. The honorable member from Ohio [Mr. Giddings], following him, after a due delay, denounced me with equal violence as having packed the most important of these committees for the purpose of betraying the North. The one proclaimed me to be the very author and originator of the Wilmot Proviso. The other reproached me as being a downright, or at best, a disguised enemy to that proviso. The one exclaimed, as the very climax of his condemnation, 'I would sooner vote for Joshua R. Giddings himself than for Robert C. Winthrop.' The other responded with an equally indignant emphasis, 'I would sooner vote for Howell Cobb than for Robert C. Winthrop, — he cannot do worse, he may do better.'

The honorable members from Tennessee and Ohio have not been the only contributors to this most amiable, consistent, and harmonious testimony in regard to my public conduct and character. An honorable colleague from Massachusetts [Mr. Allen] has cast in his mite also, both by prompting others at his elbow, and by the manlier method of direct accusation. He, too, has charged me with having arranged certain committees with the deliberate purpose of preventing the action which Northern men demanded. And more re-

cently, again, an honorable member from Virginia [Mr. Morton] in a speech which, I take pleasure in saying, was characterized by entire courtesy, if not by entire justice, has told the House and his constituents that he voted against me for Speaker because he believed me to be in favor of the Wilmot Proviso; because he believed me to be in favor of the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; and because my name was found in a minority of forty-five against the admission of Florida as a slave State.

If my name were a little less humble than I feel it this day to be, — if I were not conscious how small a claim it has to be classed among the great names, even of our own age and country, much more of the world, — I should be tempted to console myself under these conflicting accusations with those noble lines of Milton which, as it is, I cannot but remember: —

> 'Fame, if not double-faced, is double-mouthed,
> And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds;
> On both his wings, one black, the other white,
> Bears greatest names in his wild aëry flight.'

. . . Sir, when I was first a candidate for Congress, now some ten winters gone, I told the Abolitionists of my district, in reply to their interrogatories, that, while I agreed with them in most of their abstract principles, and was ready to carry them out in any just, practicable, and constitutional manner, yet, if I were elected to this House, I should not regard it as any peculiar part of my duty to agitate the subject of slavery. I have adhered to that declaration. I have been no agitator. I have sympathized with no fanatics. I have defended the rights and interests and principles of the North, to the best of my ability, wherever and whenever I have found them assailed; but I have enlisted in no crusade upon the institutions of the South. I have eschewed and abhorred ultraism at both ends of the Union. 'A plague o' both your houses' has been my constant ejaculation; and it is altogether natural, therefore, that both their houses should

cry a plague on me! I would not have it otherwise. I covet their opposition. I dote on their dislike. I desire no other testimony to the general propriety of my own course than their reproaches. I thank my God that he has endowed me, if with no other gifts, with a spirit of moderation, which incapacitates me for giving satisfaction to ultraists anywhere and on any subject. If they were to speak well of me, I should be compelled to exclaim, like one of old, 'What bad thing have I done, that such men praise me?' . . .

The honorable member [Mr. Root], in the course of a speech in which he has misrepresented and assailed at least one-half of the Northern members of this House, has told us that he was a member of 'the reviled Free-Soil sect.' Good heavens, sir, if they are the reviled, who are the revilers, and what must they be? Never, in the whole history of our country, — never, since the existence of political parties anywhere, — has there been a party which, under the pretext of philanthropy, has so revelled and luxuriated in malice, hatred, and uncharitableness — in vituperation, calumny, and slander — as this 'reviled Free-Soil sect.' I speak of their principal leaders and organs, as I know them in my own part of the country, and not of the great mass of their followers, there and elsewhere, who, I doubt not, are led along by honest impulses, and many of whom, I as little doubt, are disgusted with the music of their own trumpeters. Never, sir, I repeat, has there been witnessed in this country, or on the face of the globe, such an audacity of false statement and false accusation as that with which some of their presses have teemed. Never have there been baser stabs at character than those with which some of their speeches have reeked! I need not say that I have had my full share, and more than my full share, of their misrepresentation and abuse. I bear no special malice towards members of this House who deal with me in this style, because I know that, after all, they are but the instruments and mouth-pieces of others afar off. There is a little nest of vipers, sir, in my

own immediate district and its vicinity, who have been biting a file for three or four years past, and who, having fairly used up their own teeth, have evidently enlisted in their service the fresher fangs of some honorable members of this House. '*Odisse quem læderis.*' Conscious that they have wronged me, they now hate me; and having been thoroughly put down at home, they have turned prompters and panderers to assaults upon me here. . . .

Sir, I have done with these personalities. They have not been of my seeking. They are unnatural and revolting to my disposition. I am entirely new to this style of debate. During a ten years' occupancy of a seat in this House, I have never before had occasion to resort to it. But I could no longer submit in silence to such gross and groundless assertions. Gentlemen may vote against me whenever they please. There is no office in the gift of the House, of the people, or of the President, which I covet, or for which I would quarrel with any one for not giving me his support. But no man shall slander me with impunity. No man shall pervert and misrepresent my words and acts, and falsify the record of my public career, without exposure. That career has been one of humble pretension, and presents no claim of distinguished service of any sort. But such as it is, I am willing that it should be investigated. Examine the record. There may be votes upon it which require explanation; votes about which honest men may differ; votes as to which I may have doubted at the time, and may still doubt. But examine the record fairly and candidly; nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice; and you will find that I have neither been false to the North nor to the South, to the East nor to the West. You will find that while I have been true to my constituents, I have been true, also, to the Constitution and the Union. This, at least, I know, sir, — my conscience this day bearing me witness, — that I have been true to myself, to my own honest judgment, to my own clear convictions of right, of duty, and of patriotism.

This speech, like most of its predecessors, was circulated as a pamphlet at the time, but when, several years later, it was included in a volume for permanent reference, Mr. Winthrop appended the following foot-note to the sentence referring to certain persons living in and near his Congressional district: —

For this application of the old fable of *The Viper and the File*, as well as for some of the other sharpnesses and severities of this speech (which is here given precisely as it was delivered and published at the time), the plea of the old Roman Fabulist may be employed: —

> 'Excedit animus quem proposuit terminum;
> Sed difficulter continetur spiritus,
> Integritatis qui sinceræ conscius
> A noxiorum premitur insolentiis.'

What Von Holst calls "the well-known disreputable practice of American politicians," in materially revising speeches after delivery, — a practice sanctioned by eminent examples, — was to him objectionable. If subsequent events now and then modified in some degree an opinion he had expressed of men or things, he always preferred to let the record stand, rather than allow room for the imputation that he had suppressed or altered anything to suit any change of political circumstances or of public sentiment. In reproducing at this late day a few of the "sharpnesses and severities" above alluded to, I do so with no disposition to revive unpleasant memories, — still less to give offence, — but only because, in my judgment, a biography of a public man is of little value unless it shows clearly how he felt at critical periods, — especially at moments when he believed himself deeply wronged, — and this is best

done by using the words actually uttered by him at the time. Setting aside the matter of this speech, the manner of it is described with some minuteness in the following passages from a letter to the Boston "Courier," dated Washington, Feb. 22, 1850, written by James S. Pike, then a well-known newspaper writer, afterward minister to the Netherlands: —

"I listened to Mr. Winthrop, in a set speech, yesterday, for the first time. It was pronounced to be one of his best, and it was certainly a speech of uncommon merit, commanding the close attention of the House. . . . He declaimed with great animation in a highly finished style of elocution. His remarks were wire-woven. No broken threads or ravelled edges marred any portion. He has this great advantage as a speaker. His mind is eminently methodical, his recollective faculties are strong, active, and in constant play, at the same time that he is in the full swing of extempore composition. Such faculties are invaluable to a public speaker. They are the flying columns, the mounted forces, of his mental battalions. The heavy artillery of the intellect may open breaches, and even break the line of the enemy, but the light troops are essential to make clean work with the partially discomfited foe. Mr. Winthrop illustrated the great value of these subordinate forces on this occasion, in his apt running fire of allusion and quotation. His memory played the tender to his understanding, and handed him up grape-shot and canister, which he threw into his adversaries' camp with great effect, in the intervals of his broadside discharges. . . . The methodical character of Mr. Winthrop's mind enables him to avoid all confusion or transposition in the treatment of his topics of debate. He neither runs before, nor lags behind, the proper current of his speech. He not only says just what he designs to say, but he says it just where and when he intends to say it; moreover, he says

it in the manner designed. His thoughts are run in a mould, and his expressions daguerreotyped for the hearer. They are used like the pieces of a dissected map, and when his work is done, you see that every piece is put in its proper place and that the map is harmoniously and accurately complete. These distinguishing characteristics of Mr. Winthrop's mind, added to strong powers of intellect, great coolness and self-possession, unusual gifts of language, a chaste elocution, sufficient force and animation, with an accomplished and dignified manner, render him a pleasing, an effective, and a reliable debater. Notwithstanding the great amount and variety of talent in the House of Representatives, I do not know to whom we are to look in that body as his superior."

VI.

It was a great regret to Mr. Winthrop that Mr. Clay, on his return to the Senate after some years' absence, instead of proposing a compromise measure of his own, should not have been willing to lend his powerful and pre-eminent influence in aid of President Taylor's scheme of adjustment, which, though not the plan of all others which Mr. Winthrop would have preferred, seemed to him both practical and practicable, calculated to allay Southern sensibilities while sufficiently vindicating Northern principles, and affording the surest hope of the maintenance of domestic peace and the preservation of the Union. In various quarters a disposition was manifested to thwart General Taylor's views and embarrass his administration, to the great chagrin of some of his staunch friends, among whom was Edward Stanly of North Carolina, already alluded

to as one of the leading members of the House, who came to Mr. Winthrop shortly after Mr. Clay had introduced his celebrated Resolutions, and said substantially as follows: —

"I am very anxious Webster should know that if he can see his way clear to indorse the plan of the Administration, Taylor's Southern supporters are prepared to do their best to make him the next President. We pressed Taylor two years ago merely because it seemed the best chance of ousting the Democrats, but he has no idea of running again, and Clay is too old to be considered, though he cannot be made to realize it. The extravagancies of men like Toombs and Stephens threaten to wreck the party. We are ready to support Webster on a moderate platform."

This message was confidentially communicated to Mr. Webster by Mr. Winthrop, when a long conversation ensued, Mr. Webster stating that he had not pledged himself to sustain Clay's Resolutions, but was revolving the subject in his mind, that he was unable to see the necessity for raising any question over the restriction of slavery by attempting to organize Territorial governments in New Mexico and Utah, and that he thought well of the general drift of the President's policy. "In short," he finally added, "I am substantially with the President, and you can tell Mr. Stanly so."[1] When, therefore, at the close of his speech of

[1] It is interesting to compare this anecdote with the following extract from the accredited biography of Webster: "With the exception of the interview between Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster in January, I am not aware that any one sought to ascertain what course the latter intended to pursue in regard to the pending sectional controversy. There is no evidence whatever among his private papers which would warrant the belief that he was consulted or approached by any person in public life

February 21, 1850, Mr. Winthrop alluded with approbation to General Taylor's scheme of adjustment, stating that he should take some early opportunity of developing his views thereon, he was under the impression that Mr. Webster was in general accord with him, and he was confirmed in this idea when the latter called at his house the next morning and left a message of congratulation. The day but one after, Mr. Winthrop was summoned to Boston by the dangerous illness of a near relative, and did not get back to Washington till nearly a fortnight later. What followed is best described by the following extracts from his notes: [1] —

The evening of my return (March 6) I pulled Mr. Webster's door-bell,[2] thinking he might be glad to see some one fresh from Boston before making his speech the next day. His servant said he was very busy, but added that he knew he would see *me*, and insisted upon showing me up to his study. I found him in the last agonies of preparation, and in the act of dictating passages to his son Fletcher. I apol-

with suggestions of a political character, nor did I ever hear of such an occurrence having taken place. . . . As early as December, 1849, he learned from President Taylor and the members of his Administration what convinced him that a dangerous policy was likely to be pursued by the Executive, and that a different and more comprehensive plan of general pacification must be pursued." Life of Daniel Webster, by G. T. Curtis, vol. ii. p. 402, *n.*

[1] The essential facts contained in these notes were embodied in a paper prepared by Mr. Winthrop soon after Mr. Webster's death, and privately printed by him in 1872. The pamphlet was entitled "A Chapter of Autobiography," but as it was intended only for its author's convenient reference and to be shown to a few intimate friends, but six copies were stricken off, and it is now extremely rare.

[2] Mr. Webster and Mr. Winthrop lived near one another, the former in Louisiana Avenue, the latter in C. Street, in a house subsequently associated with Vice-President King.

ogized for disturbing him and was making off, when he called out, 'What say our friends in Boston?' I replied that I thought them satisfied with the President's policy and not disposed to press matters to a dangerous pass upon the Wilmot Proviso. He then said, 'I have not told a human being what I am going to say to-morrow, but as you are here at the last moment, I will say to you that I don't mean to have anything to do with the proviso.' It was not a propitious time to ask questions or to make suggestions, and after a little talk with Mrs. Webster in the drawing-room, I left the house. The next day I listened to the speech and immediately after its conclusion went home to dinner. Before I had risen from the table, Vinton appeared. 'Did you hear that speech,' said he, 'and what do you think of it?' I replied that we generally thought alike in such matters. He was a good deal moved and exclaimed, 'If that speech goes to the country just as it was spoken, without qualification or explanation, it will do infinite mischief, and overturn every Whig State north of the Potomac. We cannot stand it in Ohio. They will not stand it in New York, and even he cannot make it go down in Massachusetts. It is not so much what he has said as his way of saying it, and the things he has omitted. In the abstract, it is a grand speech and a patriotic one, but he will be understood as going farther than he really intends. The Whig party can stand upon General Taylor's policy; upon any other, it must fall. Pray go and beg him to revise certain passages.' I replied that while I regretted the speech as much as he did, I doubted the expediency of remonstrating verbally with Webster when he was in the full flush of a triumphant effort, surrounded, as he inevitably would be, by admirers who had come to congratulate him. I thought it wiser to put our views on paper, as I felt sure that a letter bearing our joint names would be considered by him before he went to bed. 'If, however,' I added, 'you think he should be

seen at once, you are the man to go. You are nearer his age, you have served him at a pinch, and he cannot afford to disregard the voice of Ohio.' On reflection, we agreed to concoct a letter, which was in my handwriting, though partly dictated by Vinton. The next afternoon Webster called and sat half an hour with me. He said he was grateful to us for the feelings which prompted our note, which had reached him too late; that, owing to his being greatly exhausted, he had gone to bed at an unusually early hour, having handed his notes to reporters in their original shape; but that he had been hard at work all the morning on a revision, in which he had done something to avoid misconstruction, and soften things which might grate upon Northern feelings; that he had inserted one or two passages which had been omitted in the hurry of delivery, one in particular relating to the imprisonment of Free Colored Seamen. As to the President's plan, he said that he had omitted all allusion to it for want of time, and with a view of making it the subject of a distinct speech hereafter; that he had thought of writing to the President to explain this. 'Why not go up to the White House and tell him so,' I replied; 'it is his reception night and I will call for you with my carriage.' He said he was too tired, but would take it as a great favor if I would say from him to the President, with his respectful compliments, that, in order to finish his speech in one day, he had omitted a number of things he desired to have said, particularly a tribute he would gladly have paid to the President's patriotic policy, — a policy which it was his purpose to discuss and advocate in the Senate. We then walked out together for a short distance. As we parted, he repeated, 'I am in favor of supporting General Taylor's plan, unless he himself should hereafter see cause for modifying his views so far as to recommend the organization of a Territorial Government for New Mexico.' A few hours later, I told all this to the President, who said he was a little

surprised, on reading a report of the speech in a morning paper, not to find in it a word about the Administration or its policy, but that he should be very glad of Mr. Webster's support whenever he saw fit to give it. . . .

Some time afterward (I cannot recall the exact date) I called on Webster one afternoon to express my indignation at the torrent of abuse and misrepresentation which had been poured out upon him from Northern presses and Northern pulpits, and I took occasion to add that while, as he knew, I was not fully in accord with the speech, I had exerted myself, wherever and whenever I was able, to restrain anything of the nature of unfriendly criticism or unjust insinuation. He replied, 'There is one service you can still do me. I would give ingots of gold — ingots of gold — for a suitable and satisfactory motto to a new and handsome edition of that speech which I have in the press. I should prefer a Latin sentence, but have looked through Cicero in vain. There is a verse in one of Milton's Latin poems which comes near what I want, but I cannot quite make it fay. You are strong in classical quotation, and though you may not wholly approve the speech, you ought to help me.' I said I would go home and try. I vaguely remembered some excerpts from Livy which I had made twenty years before in a copy-book I had recently brought to Washington for another purpose, and I had an idea one of them might answer. As soon as I found it I sent it round to him with the suggestion that, instead of using the entire extract, the three words *vera pro gratis* would be effective. Within ten minutes came back the hasty line, 'Just the thing, D. W.' I had expected one day to use this quotation myself, but it was entirely at his service, and was so generally liked that he had it engraved on his private seal. I once said to him in a laughing way that, if I survived him, I was entitled to that seal, and in November of the same year he sent me, with a kind note, a massive seal-ring, inscribed '*Vera pro gratis*' on the stone,

and on the ring itself 'Daniel Webster to R. C. Winthrop, 1850.'[1]

On the 31st of March died Calhoun, for whom Mr. Winthrop had much admiration and whom he always found charming in social intercourse, however much he might deplore his political views. At the request of the South Carolina delegation he paid a brief tribute to him in the House, from which I extract the following passage: —

I have been told by more than one adventurous navigator that it was worth all the privations and perils of a protracted voyage beyond the line to obtain even a passing view of the Southern Cross, — that great constellation of the Southern hemisphere. We can imagine, then, what would be the emotions of those who have always enjoyed the light of that magnificent luminary, and who have taken their daily and their nightly direction from its refulgent rays, if it were suddenly blotted out from the sky. Such I can conceive to be the emotions at this hour of not a few of the honored friends and associates whom I see around me. Indeed, no one who has been ever so distant an observer of the course of public affairs for a quarter of a century past, can fail to realize that a star of the first magnitude has been struck from our political firmament. Let us hope that it has only been transferred to a higher and purer sphere, where it may shine with undimmed brilliancy forever. . . .

The mere length and variety of his public services in almost every branch of the National Government, running through a continuous period of almost forty years, — as

[1] Mr. Winthrop kept this ring in a little box with another ring, given him by Mrs. John Quincy Adams after her husband's death and containing the latter's hair. He valued both so much that he directed they should be preserved as heirlooms in his family.

a member of this House, as Secretary of War, as Vice-President of the United States, as Secretary of State, and as a Senator from his own adored and adoring South Carolina, — would alone have secured him a conspicuous and permanent place upon our public records. But he has left better titles to remembrance than any which mere office can bestow. There was an unsullied purity in his private life; there was an inflexible integrity in his public conduct; there was an indescribable fascination in his familiar conversation; there was a condensed energy in his formal discourse; there was a quickness of perception, a vigor of deduction, a directness and a devotedness of purpose, in all that he said, or wrote, or did; there was a Roman dignity in his whole Senatorial deportment, which together made up a character which cannot fail to be contemplated and admired to the latest posterity.[1]

It was not until the 8th of May, 1850, that Mr. Winthrop succeeded in getting the floor for an hour's speech on the whole subject of the compromise, entitling it the Admission of California and the Adjustment of the Slavery Question. His object was, while standing fast to his own views previously adopted and expressed, to narrow, as far as possible, the division between Mr. Webster and the Massachusetts Whigs, and to present a conciliatory platform for their reunion. After alluding to an old Swiss patriot — of whom he had recently read an account — who, when the confederated Cantons

[1] The previous morning, after breakfast, Mr. Winthrop and I walked up Capitol Hill to Mr. Calhoun's lodgings and stood beside his coffin, in which he was full as striking a figure as he had ever been in his seat in the Senate. There was no one present but a colored servant, and the scene was severely simple, but never to be forgotten. As we turned away, Mr. Winthrop remarked, "If there are any antislavery newspaper correspondents about at this early hour, our errand will be considered fresh evidence of my apostasy to Freedom. But here was a truly great man, if there ever was one."

had become so embittered against each other by a long succession of mutual criminations that a dissolution of the confederacy was threatened, had, by his prudence, his patriotism, and his eloquence, brought back his distracted country from the verge of ruin, he went on to say: —

Sir, there is no sacrifice of personal opinion, of pride of consistency, of local regard, of official position, of present havings or of future hopes, which I would not willingly make to play such a part as this. Perhaps it may be said that it has been played already. Perhaps it may be said that a voice, or voices, have already been heard in the other end of the Capitol, if not in this, which have stilled the angry storm of fraternal discord and given us the grateful assurance that all our controversies shall be peacefully settled. At any rate, sir, whether this be so or not, I am but too sensible that it is not given to me, in this hour, to attempt such a character. And let me add, that there is one sacrifice which I could never make, even for all the glory which might result from the successful performance of so exalted a service. I mean, the sacrifice of my own deliberately adopted and honestly cherished principles. These I must avow, to-day and always. These I must stand to, here and everywhere. Under all circumstances, in all events, I must follow the lead of my own conscientious convictions of right and duty. . . .

Still less, sir, have I sought the floor for the purpose of entering into fresh controversy with anybody in this House or elsewhere. Not even the gratuitous imputations, the second-hand perversions, and stale sarcasms of the honorable member from Connecticut a few days ago can tempt me to employ another hour of this session in the mere cut and thrust of personal encounter. I pass from that honorable member with the single remark, that it required more than all his vehement and turgid declamation against others, who, as he suggested, were shaping their course with a view to some official promotion or reward, to make me, or, as I think,

to make this House forget, that the term of one of his own Connecticut Senators was soon about to expire, that the Connecticut Legislature was just about to assemble, and that the honorable member himself was well understood to be a prominent candidate for the vacancy. And I shall be equally brief with the distinguished member from Pennsylvania, who honored me with another shaft from the self-same quiver on Friday last. As I heard him pouring forth so bitter an invective, so pitiless a philippic, against Southern arrogance and Northern recreancy, and as I observed the sleek complacency with which he seemed to congratulate himself that he alone had been proof against all the seductions of patronage and all the blandishments of power, I could not help remembering that his name was an historical name more than a century ago, and the lines in which a celebrated poet embalmed it for immortality came unbidden to my lips : —

> 'Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
> He 'll shine a Tully and a *Wilmot* too ! '

Mr. Winthrop then proceeded to explain the course hitherto taken by him with reference to the restriction of slavery in the Territories, referring more particularly to his action from 1845 to 1847, and reading extracts from speeches already alluded to in this memoir.

I hold now [said he], as I did three years ago, that it is entirely constitutional for Congress to apply the principles of the ordinance of 1787 to any territory which may be added to the Union. I hold now, as I held then, that the South have no right to complain of such an application of these principles by those of us who have declared this doctrine in advance, and who have steadily opposed all acquisition of territory. I hold now, as I held then, that their reproaches and fulminations ought to be exclusively reserved for those among themselves, and for their allies in other parts of the

country, who have persisted in bringing this territory into the Union to be the subject of a great domestic struggle. . . . Gentlemen talk of settling the whole controversy which has been kindled between the North and the South by some sweeping compromise, or some comprehensive plan of reconciliation. I trust that the controversy will be settled, sir; but I most earnestly hope and pray that it will not be so settled that we shall ever again imagine that we can enter with impunity on a career of aggression, spoliation, and conquest. This embittered strife, this protracted suspense, these tedious days and weeks and months of anxiety and agitation, will have had their full compensation and reward if they shall teach us never again to forget the curse which has been pronounced upon those 'who remove their neighbors' landmarks,' — if they shall teach us to realize, in all time to come, that a policy of peace, and of justice towards others, is the very law and condition of our own domestic harmony. . . .

I have no faith in the plan of raking open all the subjects of disagreement and difference which have existed at any time between different sections of the country, with a view of attempting to bring them within the influence of some single panacea. Certainly, sir, if such a plan is to be attempted, we are not to forget that there are two sides to the question of aggression. The Southern States complain, on the one side, that some of their runaway slaves have not been delivered up, according to the provisions of the Constitution. The Northern States complain, on the other side, that some of their freemen have been seized and imprisoned, contrary to the provisions of the same Constitution. I will not undertake to compare the two grievances; but this I do say, that if the one is to be insisted on as a subject for immediate redress and reparation, I see not why the other should not be also. For myself, I acknowledge my allegiance to the whole Constitution of the United States, and I am willing to unite in fulfilling and enforcing, in all reasonable and proper

modes, every one of its provisions. I recognize, indeed, a Power above all human law-makers, and a code above all earthly constitutions! And whenever I perceive a plain conflict of jurisdiction and authority between the Constitution of my country and the laws of my God, my course is clear. I shall resign my office, whatever it may be, and renounce all connection with the public service of any sort. But it is a libel upon the Constitution, and, what is worse, it is a libel upon the great and good men who framed, adopted, and ratified it, to assert or insinuate that there is any such inconsistency. It is a favorite policy, I know, of some of the ultraists in my own part of the country, to stigmatize the Constitution as a proslavery compact. I deny it. I hold, on the other hand, that it is a pro-liberty contract, — the most effective that the world has ever seen, Magna Charta not excepted.

Mr. Winthrop then discussed at some length the Constitution in its relation to slavery, continuing: —

Undoubtedly, Mr. Chairman, there are provisions in the Constitution which involve us in painful obligations, and from which some of us would rejoice to be relieved; but whenever any measure is proposed to me for fulfilling or enforcing any one of its clear obligations or express stipulations, I shall give to it every degree of attention, consideration, and support which the justice, the wisdom, the propriety, and the practicability of its peculiar provisions may demand or warrant. In legislating, however, for the restoration of Southern slaves, I shall not forget the security of Northern freemen. Nor in testifying my allegiance to what has been termed the extradition clause of the Constitution, shall I overlook those great fundamental principles of all free governments, — the *Habeas Corpus* and the Trial by Jury.

He then proceeded to warmly advocate the immediate admission of California with her existing Constitution.

It is said [he added] that this Constitution has been *cooked*. Who cooked it? That her people have been tampered with. Who tampered with them? As has been truly said, we have a Southern President and a majority of Southern men in the Cabinet; and they sent a Southern agent — a Georgia member of Congress — a gentleman, let me say, for whose character and conduct I have the highest respect — to bear their despatches and communicate their views to the California settlers. It is said that these settlers are a wild, reckless, floating population, bent only upon digging gold, and unworthy to be trusted in establishing a government. Sir, I do not believe a better class of emigrants was ever found flocking in such numbers to any new settlement on the face of the earth. The immense distance, the formidable difficulties, and the onerous expense of the pilgrimage to California, necessarily confined the emigration to men of some pecuniary substance as well as to men of more than ordinary physical endurance. . . .

'But what is to become of our equilibrium?' says an honorable friend from South Carolina. 'What security are the Southern States to have against the growing preponderance of Northern power?' Mr. Chairman, half the troubles which have convulsed the old world for two centuries past, have grown out of an imagined necessity of preserving the balance of power, or maintaining what is now denominated a sectional equilibrium. And so it will be here. The very idea of this equilibrium is founded on views of sectional jealousy, sectional fear, sectional hostility and hate. It presupposes an encroaching and oppressive spirit on one side or the other, but no such state of things exists. Nothing, certainly, can be more unfounded than the idea that the North has any real hostility to the South, or that Northern men, as a class, are desirous of injuring, or even of irritating, their Southern brethren. They know that the interests of all parts of the country are bound up together in the same bundle of life or death, for the same good or evil destiny.

They desire — from a mere selfish interest of their own, if you will have it so — the prosperity and welfare of the Southern States, and rejoice at every indication of their increasing wealth and power. They believe, indeed, that the worst enemy of these States is that which they cherish so jealously and so passionately within their own bosom. They believe slavery to have originated in a monstrous wrong. They believe its continuance to be a great evil. They are undoubtedly of opinion that in this day of civilization and Christianity, it would well become those who are responsible for its continuance, to be looking about at least for some prospective and gradual system, by which at some far distant, if not at some earlier day, it may be brought to an end. They are ready, as I believe, to bear their share of the cost and sacrifice of any such system. But they know that they themselves have no power over the subject. They acknowledge that, so far as slavery in the States is concerned, they possess no constitutional right to interfere with it in any way whatever. . . . But, Mr. Chairman, this idea that a free State is never to be admitted to the Union without a slave State to match it, is, in my judgment, as impracticable as it is unjustifiable. . . . Sir, you did not wait for a free State to come in hand in hand with Texas. You regarded no principles of equilibrium or uniformity on that occasion. You brought her in to disturb the equilibrium then existing, and to secure for the South a preponderance in at least one branch of the Government. And with this example in our immediate view, the North, the free States, cannot but feel aggrieved if the admission of California is to be made in any degree dependent upon considerations of this sort. . . .

And now, turning from California, what remains? New Mexico and Utah. And what are we to do with them? Nothing, nothing, I reply, which shall endanger the harmony and domestic peace of these United States. Undoubtedly my own honest impulse and earnest disposition would be to organize territorial governments over both of them, and to

ingraft upon those governments the principles of the ordinance of 1787. If I were consulting only my own feelings, or what I believe to be the wishes and views of the people of New England, this would be my unhesitating course, though I am under the impression that the laws of Mexico abolishing slavery are still in force in New Mexico. But, sir, I am not for overturning the government of my country, or for running any risk of so disastrous a result, in order to accomplish this object in the precise mode which would be most satisfactory to myself. Nor would I press such a course pertinaciously upon Congress; even although the consequences should be nothing more serious than to plant a sting in the bosoms of the people of the South, or to leave an impression in their minds that they had been wronged and humiliated. What, then, am I ready to do? Sir, I have already expressed my intention to stand by the President's plan on this subject, and nothing has since occurred to change that intention. I have heard this plan stigmatized as weak and contemptible; but I believe it to be wise and patriotic, and one which, whether it succeeds or fails, will have entitled the President to the unmingled gratitude and respect of the American people. It is, in my judgment, the only plan which gives a triumph to neither side of this controversy, and to neither section of the Union, and which thus leaves no just pretence for the formation of geographical parties. It is a middle ground, on which both sides can meet without the abandonment of any principle, or the sacrifice of any point of honor, and I can truly say that I agree to it in a spirit of conciliation and concession, regarding it as a compromise worthy of a Southern President to offer, and worthy of both the Southern and the Northern people to accept. . . .

Most gladly would I have found myself agreeing more entirely with some of the friends whom I see around me, and with more than one of those elsewhere, with whom I have always been proud to be associated, and whose lead, on almost all occasions, I have rejoiced to follow. . . . I see, Mr. Chair-

man, in the territorial possessions of this Union, the seats of new states, the cradles of new commonwealths, the nurseries, it may be, of new Republican empires. I see in them the future abodes of our brethren, our children, and our children's children, for a thousand generations. I see growing up within their borders institutions upon which the character and condition of a vast multitude of the American family, and of the human race, in all time to come, are to depend. I feel that, for the original shaping and moulding of these institutions, you and I, and each one of us who occupy these seats, are in part responsible. And I look back instinctively to the day, now more than two hundred years ago, when the forefathers of New England were planting their little colony upon that rock-bound shore, — to a day when slavery existed nowhere upon the American continent, and before that first Dutch ship, 'built in the eclipse and rigged with curses dark,' had made its way to Jamestown, with a cargo of human beings in bondage! I reflect how much our fathers would have exulted, could they have arrested the progress of that ill-starred vessel, and of all others of kindred employment. I remember how earnestly the patriots of Virginia and South Carolina again and again pleaded and protested against the policy of Great Britain in forcing slaves upon them against their will. I recall the original language of the Declaration of Independence, as first drafted by Thomas Jefferson, assigning it as one of the moving causes for throwing off our allegiance to the British monarch, that, 'determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he had prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce.' I remember, too, that whatever material advantages may have since been derived from slave labor, in the cultivation of a crop which was then unknown to our country, the moral character and social influences of the institution are still precisely what they were described to be, by those who understood them best, in the earlier days of the Republic. And I see, too, as

no man can help seeing, that almost all the internal dangers and domestic dissensions which cast a doubt, or a shadow of doubt, upon the perpetuity of the Union, have been and still are, the direct or indirect consequences of the existence of this institution. And thus seeing, thus remembering, thus reflecting, how can I do otherwise than resolve that it shall be by no vote of mine that slavery shall be established in any territory where it does not already exist?[1]

I here resume my extracts from Mr. Winthrop's notes: —

Ashmun and other confidential friends of Webster expressed themselves as entirely satisfied with the ground I had taken. Choate sent me word he considered it an admirable *juste milieu* between the 7th of March speech and the rhapsodies of Horace Mann. On the other hand, I learned that —— had positively asserted that Webster had told him in Boston that he should not speak to Mr. Winthrop again. To test this, on Webster's return (for he was absent when I spoke) I accosted him when we first met, at James G. King's. He was polite, but frigid, and evidently out of humor that evening, for to poor Daniel P. King his manner was quite savage. Just after this, Hiram Ketchum, a devoted friend of Webster, wrote to me for three hundred copies of the speech to distribute in New York, telling me he had caused passages from it to be inserted in many newspapers. In thanking him, I expressed regret that D. W. had not shared his complimentary opinion of it. Ketchum replied, 'Give him time. I am writing what I think.' I imagine

[1] In the second volume of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power, Henry Wilson describes this speech (to which he assigns a wrong date) as "very able and adroit, an attempt to reconcile his former votes in favor of the Wilmot Proviso with the new policy and new departure he was about to adopt." Whether this was a fair account of it, there may be two opinions. It will be found in full, with earlier Congressional speeches, in the first volume of Mr. Winthrop's Addresses.

Webster obtained his first impression without having read what I had really said, as shortly after he was cordial as ever, and I perceived the breach was healed. Fillmore was good enough to say he thought it the best speech made in the House during the session. *Per contra*, Cass attacked me in the Senate and said (so I am assured) that my flattery of the President was 'sickening,' but he much softened this in the Globe and even paid me a compliment. Toombs, too, made a premeditated and concerted onslaught upon me, which he greatly changed in the Globe, leaving me less ground for a reply, had I cared to make one. Some one mailed me a copy of this speech, published in *Ohio* without my knowledge. I thought of sending it to Giddings.

Partly owing to a short-sightedness which often prevented him from recognizing persons with whom he was but slightly acquainted, and partly to a certain native *hauteur*, Mr. Winthrop was, as a rule, no favorite with reporters, but I find in a local paper the following description of a reception given by him on the 4th of July, 1850: —

"Mr. Winthrop's brilliant reception on the evening of the 4th was such a gathering as Faneuil Hall would have approved on this anniversary. It was a purely *American* party, the patriotism and good taste of the host having in his invitations to his numerous guests discarded all distinction of party or locality. Governor McDowell of Virginia was among the first who entered; so the Bay State and the old Dominion stood hand-in-hand as they did in the persons of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson in 1776. At supper Mr. Winthrop had on his left Mr. Cobb, his successful competitor for the Speakership, with Vice-President Fillmore on his right. Near by were Benton and Foote, Webster and Horace Mann, the members elect from California, with Clingman and

Venable, who are striving to keep them out, and members of the Cabinet side by side with those who are ready to impeach them; but all in genial companionship. Strange antagonisms were thus blended under the influence of old associations, and the memory of the fathers appeased for the moment the animosities of their sons. The occasion was altogether one of the most agreeable I have witnessed in Washington, but there was one feature which gave it a tinge of a different character. It was understood to be a sort of farewell gathering, in view of Mr. Winthrop's approaching retirement from Congress, a course which, I am told, he is fully resolved upon. Such a man, it is true, cannot long remain in retirement while public virtue and statesmanlike accomplishments are regarded as a passport to the public service. But Washington society will miss the elegant hospitality so liberally exercised by Mr. Winthrop, and they will miss even more the presence of a statesman whose character is formed upon the model of those who filled the highest official station in the earlier and purer days of the Republic."

Five days later came a thunder-clap, the death of President Taylor after a short illness, — a profound grief to Mr. Winthrop, and an irreparable misfortune, as he thought, to the country. In his remarks on the subject in the House (July 10, 1850), he said: —

There are those of us, I need not say, who had looked to him with affection and reverence as our chosen leader and guide in the difficulties and perplexities by which we are surrounded. There are those of us who had relied confidently on him, as upon no other man, to uphold the Constitution and maintain the Union of the country in that future upon which 'shadows, clouds, and darkness' may well be said to rest. And as we now behold him, borne away by the hand of God from our sight, we can hardly repress the

exclamation which was applied to the departing prophet of old, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.' . . .

I hazard nothing, sir, in saying that the roll of our Chief Magistrates, since 1789, illustrious as it is, presents the name of no man who has enjoyed a higher reputation with his contemporaries, or who will enjoy a higher reputation with posterity, than Zachary Taylor, for some of the best and noblest qualities which adorn our nature. His indomitable courage, his unimpeachable honesty, his Spartan simplicity and sagacity, his frankness, kindness, moderation, and magnanimity, his fidelity to his friends, his generosity and humanity to his enemies, the purity of his private life, the patriotism of his public principles, will never cease to be cherished in the grateful remembrance of all just men and all true-hearted Americans. As a soldier and a general, his fame is associated with some of the proudest and most thrilling scenes of our military history. As a civilian and statesman, during the brief period in which he has been permitted to enjoy the transcendent honors which a grateful country had awarded him, he has given proof of a devotion to duty, of an attachment to the Constitution and the Union, of a patriotic determination to maintain the peace of the country, which no trials or temptations could shake. He has borne his faculties meekly, but firmly. He has been 'clear in his great office.' He has known no local partialities or prejudices, but has proved himself capable of embracing his whole country in the comprehensive affections and regards of a large and generous heart.

On the 14th of July Mr. Winthrop, who had been both a pall-bearer of the deceased President and Chairman of the Committee of the House which escorted his successor to take the oath, wrote his friend Clifford as follows: —

The funeral was impressive. 'Old Whitey' pressed close to the coffin, as if he knew his master was there, reminding me of Vernet's Dead Trumpeter. All else was cold and formal. Scott, his great military rival, if not enemy, at the head of the escort; Cass, Clay, Webster, and Benton, among the pall-bearers, — gave, certainly, no impression of grief at his loss; Truman Smith, Vinton, Joe Gales, and I did most of the mourning, I fancy, in that part of the procession. For myself, it requires all my faith in an overruling Providence to prevent me from regarding the loss as irreparable and fatal. In any strife which may await us, his name was worth to us an army with banners. Another week, too, would have brought from him a manifesto, which would have done more to bring things to a crisis, and ultimately settle them, than anything which could have been done. But the past is beyond recall. What of the future? Fillmore is an amiable, excellent, conscientious fellow. What he will do remains to be seen. Clay and Webster have been closeted with him, and he sent me a message by a New York friend that he would like to see me. I called, but did not find him. If he really wishes to see me, he will send again. Clay presses Webster for Secretary of State, and there is a rumor that he recommends *Toombs* for Secretary of War. If this latter nomination be made, my course is clear. 'What fellowship hath light with darkness? Or what concord a Christian with Belial?' As to Webster's nomination, I see that it will jeopard the Whig party in the Free States, and indicate a policy on Fillmore's part which I cannot altogether approve. Still I shall not oppose it, or say anything against it. The times are out of joint, and it needs a strong man to carry on the Government. If Fillmore takes Webster, we must support him as well as we can. I am aware that my own name is mentioned for the State Department, but I do not think anything would tempt me to take it. Even if my health would stand it, what could I do with Clay and Webster in open, or tacit, opposition? . . . But for the

odium of the Galphin claim, I should like to have Fillmore go right on, taking up the thread where Taylor dropped it, keeping the Cabinet just as it is. Some of them are excellent fellows, Ewing especially. Crawford, however, has given an odor of unscrupulousness to the whole concern which makes it difficult to keep them.

The member of the Massachusetts delegation who was on a confidential footing with the new President was Joseph Grinnell of New Bedford, who was also a very intimate friend of Mr. Winthrop, from whose notes I here continue my extracts: —

Late in the evening of July 16th Grinnell came in and said, 'Fillmore is always slow in making up his mind, but this time he is in a pitiable state of indecision, there are so many doubts and difficulties, and he is so anxious to do the right thing. The offer of the State Department lies between you and Webster. Personally he would prefer you, but Webster is strongly urged. He would like to talk the matter over with you, and says he thinks he can rely on you for disinterested advice.' I replied that it would be better to make an appointment, which Grinnell did for the next day. I found Nathan K. Hall and one or two other persons in the President's parlor,[1] and he took me into his dressing-room, where there was but one chair, and we sat together on a narrow bed, in true Republican simplicity. I told him I would not waste time by beating about the bush, that I understood from Grinnell that he was hesitating whether to offer the State Department to Webster or to me, and that he would like my frank opinion on the subject. He nodded assent. I said that, after careful consideration, I had come to a very decided conclusion that Webster should have the preference. As to myself, while I did not affect to doubt

[1] Mr. Fillmore had not yet taken possession of the White House, but was at Willard's hotel.

my own capacity, and had been urged to take the post, if offered, I did not believe my appointment would be a wise one in the existing condition of the country; that I was obnoxious to men of extreme opinions at both ends of the Union; that some Southern Whigs, who had hitherto stood by me against Toombs, were disappointed with what I had said on the 8th of May; that in my own State I was now between three fires, — the Democracy, the Free-Soilers, and certain Webster Whigs, who blamed me for not indorsing the 7th of March speech and who would be furious if I were preferred to Webster; that I should be willing to risk my health by remaining some years longer in Washington if I felt there was a probability of my accomplishing any real good at the head of his Cabinet, but my feeling was just the other way. As to Webster, that he was an intellectual giant, with a weight in the country beside which my own was insignificant; that I had not always been able to agree with him; that I had sometimes thought him influenced by jealousy or pique, but that I believed him to be at heart a true patriot, whose recent course, much as I regretted it, was dictated by a sincere desire to save the country from civil war; that as a measure of mere party expediency I might hesitate to recommend an appointment which would undoubtedly shock many Northern Whigs, but in view of the dangers and difficulties which surrounded the Union, I believed he would be the safest choice. Fillmore replied at some length, saying among other things that a President might well hesitate to be overshadowed in his own Cabinet, that Webster was not easy to get on with; reminding me that when he (Fillmore) was Chairman of Ways and Means and Webster Secretary of State to Tyler, they had differed over the Exchequer bill, and Webster had not spoken to him for more than a year. I rejoined that no one was better aware than myself of the awful character of Webster's frowns, that I did not contend that he was an ideal *premier*, but that I honestly believed him to be, all things considered, the wisest selection in the

existing crisis. He said he would take a night to think it over, and we then discussed some other matters. I did not consider it quite fair to ask him point blank if he intended to adopt Taylor's policy; but he left in my mind the impression that he approved it. When we parted he said some complimentary things about me which I will not set down. As soon as I got home I made a point of letting Ashmun know the substance of what had taken place, in case it should reach Webster's ears that I had been closeted with the President. The next day, while at my desk in the House, Webster sent for me to come into the lobby, said he had learned from more than one source the advice I had given, and had come to thank me; that while he thought me well fitted to be Secretary of State, and hoped one day to see me in that office, he was himself not indisposed to resume it, and had reason to believe it would now be offered to him. I replied that my advice had been given on public grounds, and not as a matter of private friendship. He rejoined, with great cordiality, 'I am none the less sensible of your generous and manly course.' [1]

On the day the nominations went to the Senate, Webster again sent for me to the lobby. 'Before you and I leave this sofa,' said he, 'I shall probably have been confirmed. Now, if there is anything under the sun that I can do for you, name it. Shall I write to Governor Briggs asking him to appoint you as my successor?' I replied that I had rather not; that though I had fully expected to break up my estab-

[1] The utterance of a conventional *nolo episcopari* is not confined to English prelates. On the 21st of July (three days after this conversation) Mr. Webster wrote Peter Harvey, "I was persuaded to think it was my duty in the present crisis to accept a seat in the Cabinet, but it made my heart ache to think of it." Private Correspondence of Daniel Webster, vol. ii. p. 378. On the same day he wrote Franklin Haven, "I never did anything more reluctantly than taking the office which I have taken. . . . You will be glad to know that Mr. Winthrop acted in the most friendly, open, and decided manner. He behaved like a man throughout." Life of Daniel Webster, by G. T. Curtis, vol. ii. p. 465.

lishment in Washington at the end of the session, the honor of succeeding to Daniel Webster's seat in the Senate was too great to be put aside, but that, if it came, it must come unsought; that my name would obviously occur to Briggs without any prompting, but that there were other claims, and he must have a free hand. He rejoined, 'All I can say is that if, while I am at the head of affairs, there should be any way in which, directly or indirectly, I can be of service to you, you will have only to say the word.' I thanked him for his friendly expressions, but said such a word would never be spoken by me. The following Sunday morning he sat in my pew at Dr. Butler's church, as he was often in the habit of doing. As we walked away after service, he mentioned that all his letters stated that I was to be Senator. I replied that I had at first been pleased with the idea, but now had some misgivings on the subject. 'How so?' said he. I answered that if I went to the Senate just now, my attitude might seem to him an ungracious one; that I had no new speeches to make, that my platform was laid down, and I could take no step backward; that, differing as we did about the Compromise measures, my votes might not be altogether agreeable to him. He said, 'To tell the honest truth, I should not be sorry if you were called away for a fortnight or so; but, as it is, we must make the best of it. Of course you cannot change your ground.'

The next morning brought Mr. Winthrop his commission. His promotion was greeted by a diversity of appreciation in New England, and as a perceptible degree of sameness is apt to pervade the congratulations of personal friends and political supporters, I prefer to cull an extract from a sprightly leader in the Worcester "Spy," then the most active Free-Soil organ in Massachusetts: —

"Robert C. Winthrop will make a fit successor to Daniel

Webster in the Senate of the United States; and the only consolation we have in his appointment is that he has been taken away from the House, where there is a bare chance that his place may be filled by a better man, — a worse they will hardly be able to get."

VII.

When Mr. Winthrop entered the Senate (July 30, 1850), that body was in the last stages of the discussion of the Compromise measures, important votes occurring daily, — one of them only an hour after he had taken his seat. He had no new profession of political faith to make, but he was soon drawn into the debate, speaking at intervals upon a variety of questions, — in particular upon the Texas Boundary Bill, the Fugitive Slave Bill, and the Bill for abolishing the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia. These speeches, though not infrequent, were comparatively short, and they contain no passages which it is essential to cite in this memoir.[1] I prefer therefore to quote extracts from a few of his private letters: —

[Aug. 1, 1850.] The Compromise is dead, and I 'saw it die.' I can't say that I did much with 'my little bow and arrow,' but I made one motion which had more import than it may seem. It was the only way of getting a clean vote in favor of the California Bill, and a clean vote against the Utah Bill. Failing to strike out Utah from California, the only way was to strike out California from Utah. So said Benton, Smith, Phelps, Clarke, and other old stagers at the outset;

[1] They are all to be found in the "Congressional Globe," some of them in Mr. Winthrop's volumes. One is described by Henry Wilson as "brief, but very cogent." See "Rise and Fall of the Slave Power," vol. ii. p. 294.

and so said Ewing, Davis, Seward, Baldwin, and your humble servant, on a reconsideration. They put it upon me to father the motion, but the sponsors must take their share of the responsibility. It was the only mode by which the bill could be reduced to its simple elements, and by which the great principle of unmixed legislation could be vindicated.

[Aug. 11.] As Clay had publicly laid the whole blame of the defeat of the Compromise on Pearce,[1] the latter has been hard at work on a settlement of the Boundary question, and has consulted Senators both from Texas and New England (myself included) in the hope of reconciling their conflicting views. His measure does not wholly satisfy me, and I anticipate not a few revilings from Massachusetts extremists for my support of it. But I trust the Whig party proper will be able to stand what Taylor suggested, Fillmore proposed, Webster advised, and John Davis and I voted for. We voted in company with Clarke and Greene of Rhode Island, Truman Smith of Connecticut, Phelps of Vermont, and Cooper of Pennsylvania. If other Free-State Whigs would have gone with us, all would have been easy; but Ewing, with an election in Ohio before him, did not like to separate from Chase; Seward clung to Hale; and Baldwin and Upham are rigid against the slightest concession. The bill involved no principle, — it was a mere question of acres and dollars, — but it was the one thing needful for the public peace. It has taken away the whole platform of the disorganizers. Settle this Texan boundary, run the New-Mexican line, and, whatever happens, the Union is safe. Texas itself becomes a guaranty for this, for her sympathies are all with the conservative South, and she has had no fellowship with the nullifiers except upon the question of her territorial rights. By this bill we have saved for free soil much that would have been doomed to slavery, and we can now wait patiently until New Mexico shall be admitted as a State. Still it was a pill

[1] James A. Pearce, Senator from Maryland, a particular friend of the writer.

to swallow, and Davis and I felt bound to complain both of the boundaries and the *bonus*, and to attempt some alteration. Yet, on the whole, my judgment approves. Grinnell and Ashmun are strong for it; and, I think, Rockwell and Duncan. The Southern Ultras will leave no stone unturned to defeat it. . . . We shall admit California (D. V.) on Monday.

[Aug. 25.] The Fugitive Bill, with all its objectionable features, has passed to be engrossed. It is neither Webster's bill nor Clay's, but James M. Mason's, of which, however, my illustrious predecessor said that he intended to support it, with all its provisions, to the full extent. Not so said I; and, after trying in vain for Trial by Jury, and *Habeas Corpus* and Protection for Free Colored Seamen, I voted against it. The South, as I think, has overreached itself in pressing this bill. They will get few runaways under it, while it will be a constant source of irritation and inflammation; besides giving a fresh base to the Free-Soil party. . . . Webster was so much gratified by Davis's and my support of Pearce's Boundary Bill, that he called on Gov. D. (from whom, as you know, he has been for some time alienated), and then insisted that we should both dine with him. D. was prevented by a family affliction, but I went, finding the entire Cabinet, including Scott, who is acting Secretary of War, and who had previously been to see me to urge going for Pearce's bill.

[Sept. 15.] Davis and I took some risk in voting against Seward's indiscreet amendment to the Bill for abolishing the Slave Trade in the District. But wisdom is justified of her children, and our course is crowned by the passage of the bill yesterday. My personal relations with Seward are pleasant, but I fear he is bent on mischief and designs to get up issues for placing other people in a false position. His organ (Weed) attacked me grossly on the strength of an inaccurate telegraphic report of what I said. The truth is, Seward is at heart anti-Fillmore and anti-Administration, and, unless I am greatly mistaken, he will one day go over to the Free Soilers.

Speaking of telegraphic blunders, did you see a very amusing one about me? 'Senator Downs of Louisiana made a speech denunciatory of Mr. Winthrop's *violent manner, both in matter and in gesticulation.*' This was *intended* to read 'Senator Downs of Louisiana made a speech denunciatory of Mr. Winthrop, violent both in matter and gesticulation.' On the strength of this mistake, some newspaper-mouser of the future in the guise of a historian may represent me to have been a sort of swashbuckler!

Of the various exciting topics then in controversy between the two sections of the Union, — particularly between the inhabitants of the Northern and Southern seaboards, — the most inflammatory was the question of the proper treatment of free colored seamen in Southern ports. On the one hand, the South honestly believed these seamen often to be abolition emissaries, the possible instigators of slave insurrections, who, as a measure of precaution, were to be subjected to stringent laws; while, on the other hand, the sensibilities of the North were continually outraged by the severity of such laws, and the hardships resulting from them to innocent and inoffensive persons. Mr. Winthrop had long been familiar with this subject, having treated it fully in a report made by him to the House on behalf of the Committee on Commerce, in 1843, and it was a matter in which the shipowners of Boston were deeply interested. It was, however, far from his intention to signalize the first month of his Senatorial career by stirring up any discussion of these obnoxious laws; but it so happened that to Mr. Clay's Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia, Senator Pratt of Maryland had proposed an amendment dealing with the free

colored population of the District in a manner which Mr. Winthrop considered unwarrantable and unjust. In condemning and opposing the Pratt amendment, he made a passing allusion to the abuses arising from some of the police regulations of Southern States; and when Senator Butler of South Carolina had objected to the word "abuses," contending that the regulations complained of were practically measures of self-preservation, Mr. Winthrop felt obliged to produce evidence. Thereupon an angry debate sprang up, stretching over two days (Sept. 11–12, 1850), Senators Berrien of Georgia, Davis of Mississippi, Downs and Soulé of Louisiana, all warmly sustaining Butler, accusing Mr. Winthrop of exaggeration, and subjecting him to a running fire of interruption and criticism. He was forced to speak half a dozen times, at some length and with much animation; but as Butler and Berrien were old friends, and he had latterly seen something of Jefferson Davis (who was General Taylor's son-in-law), he strove to give no cause of offence, except in so far as it was necessary to vindicate his statements. To Senator Soulé, indeed, he was magnanimous. The latter had denied the existence of a Louisiana law which had been cited, and roundly intimated that Mr. Winthrop had been imposed upon. As Soulé was a leader of the New Orleans bar, this assertion was for the moment accepted as conclusive, until a few days later Mr. Winthrop procured a printed copy of the statute to which he had alluded. Instead, however, of producing it on the floor and making a scene, he showed it privately to Soulé, suggesting that he should choose his own form of retraction in the Senate, which he did,

frankly admitting that his memory had betrayed him. After the second day's debate was over, Mr. Clay took occasion to say to Mr. Winthrop that he felt that the latter had been treated with unusual and unnecessary harshness, but that it was attributable to the excited state of Southern feeling. "You have little reason to complain," he added; "you held your own against great odds." [1] Horace Mann evidently preferred a more drastic method of treating political opponents. In one of his private letters from Washington, published after his death and dated Sept. 15, 1850, he says: —

"There has been a very sharp debate in the Senate, in which the Southern men rode and overrode Mr. Winthrop, and hunted up all the ugly things they could say about Massachusetts and pitched them at him. I do not think Mr. Winthrop has sustained himself very well. He ought to have carried the war into Africa, or, at least, to have repelled the intruders from his own territory. When we speak of the South *as they are*, the first thing they do is to ransack our old history and quote whatever they can find, either against the law of toleration as we now consider it, or the duties of humanity as a higher civilization exemplifies and expounds them. They have never yet been properly answered. If

[1] Not long after, Mr. Winthrop printed and circulated a pamphlet containing, not merely this debate, but one which occurred a few days earlier, bearing upon the same subject, together with some subsequent explanations and a variety of evidence, — the whole extracted from the "Congressional Globe," and entitled "Proceedings of the United States Senate on the Fugitive Slave Bill, the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia, and the Imprisonment of Free Colored Seamen in the Southern Ports; with the Speeches of Senators Davis, Winthrop, and others." As this pamphlet comprised nearly seventy pages of small type, he did not include it in his published works, but it is to be found in most large libraries.

some such man as Sumner was in the seat, he would turn the tables on them." [1]

From Boston, however, Mr. Winthrop received letters of approval from men of different shades of opinion. Edward Everett, for instance, wrote: —

"I cannot forbear writing you a line to thank you for your manly and well-sustained stand on the subject of the *code noir* of the Southern States. Nothing could have been done more handsomely, effectively, or in better taste. Although certain Senators may affect to treat your statements with disdain, and meet them with contumely, they will in their hearts respect you for the boldness and freedom with which you have assailed the abuses of their system."

Richard H. Dana, Jr., wrote: —

"Permit me to congratulate you upon the manner in which you conducted this debate. The style in which it was done is commended by all. Massachusetts is with you on this point, and in all your late votes, I do not doubt; but Boston is against you. I do not wish to disparage my own city, but the composition of its elements is peculiar. It is not the Boston of 1776 or 1820." [2]

Anson Burlingame wrote: —

"[Sept. 19, 1850.] Permit me to say that your replies to Jefferson Davis, Downs, Soulé and Co. were models of dignified yet indignant rebuke, and have awakened for you countless sympathies in hearts heretofore closed against you politically. I am not singular in this estimate of your efforts. Many of the most worthy and able men with whom I have

[1] Life of Mann, p. 230. This gratification was in store for him.

[2] What Mr. Dana implied was that, at this juncture, the Democracy and Webster Whigs united could control Boston.

lately voted express themselves unreservedly to the same extent. I honestly think — and I say it frankly to you — that your recent bearing in the Senate has done more to commend you to the people of this State than any other act of your stirring political life. We of the North are, as a general thing, not so well trained as Southern statesmen for sudden parliamentary encounters; but here you met an occasion of great difficulty, and met it bravely and brilliantly, exhibiting both tact and power. . . .

"If you ever see the 'Republican,' a sickly paper which pretends or tries to speak for the Free-Soil party, pray give no heed to its reckless statements. It is in the hands of General Wilson, a good enough man in his proper place, but who is altogether beyond his depth in editing a newspaper. He is, or has been, anxious to get up another truck and dicker. We Whig Free-Soilers knocked that Democratic move in the head after considerable trouble, and we have not the least idea of being traded off to the Democracy to gratify anybody's desire to go to the United States Senate. Such men as Samuel Hoar, Stephen C. Phillips, Hopkins, Adams, Dana, etc., say openly that if anything of the kind is attempted, they must beg leave to wash their hands of it." [1]

One letter I give in full, because the writer was perhaps the last person in New England from whom Mr. Winthrop could have anticipated a word of praise: —

West Roxbury, Sept. 23, 1850.

Dear Sir, — I have not been always much of an admirer of your course in Congress, and have often felt pained at the thought that the Representative from Boston should do as

[1] I am obliged to quote this passage in order to give some idea of the letters addressed to Mr. Winthrop, by persons not of his own way of thinking, with regard to the famous Massachusetts Coalition. I disclaim, however, any purpose of casting reflections upon General Wilson, concerning whose "depth" Mr. Burlingame undoubtedly changed his mind before long.

you have done. But of late your votes and your speeches in the Senate of the United States have been so just and so noble, as it seems to me, that I feel impelled to write you this note — stranger as I am to you — to thank you for the honorable and manly stand you have taken lately in the Senate. I know some of your friends (I mean your former friends) will excuse it on the score of policy and defend you, while they differ from you, because they will say the People of Massachusetts were to be conciliated before they choose a Senator. Some of your political opponents, I suppose, will be of the same opinion. But I can only ascribe your conduct to such motives as ought to animate a manly man, — *a desire to do what is absolutely right.* Allow me to say to yourself — what I would rather say anywhere else — that your conduct now seems particularly honorable and manly, when the temptation to swerve from justice seems to be so strong, and when there are such eminent examples of departure from the Eternal Right. Do not give yourself the trouble to answer this note, but accept the hearty thanks of

Your Obt. Servt.

THEO. PARKER.

HON. ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

Congress adjourned on the 30th of September, meeting again early in December. Here follow a few more extracts from Mr. Winthrop's private letters: —

[Oct. 18, 1850.] I am by no means sure Massachusetts Whiggery will survive the shock the passage of the Fugitive Bill has given it, particularly as it is understood that the Democrats and Free Soilers have at last agreed on an equitable division of the loaves and fishes. How high-minded men can have anything to do with such a bargain passes my comprehension; but then high-minded men are scarce in politics, and as I am to be the principal loser by the transaction, I am naturally open to the suspicion of looking at it with a jaun-

diced eye.[1] With my uncertain health and great dislike of the Washington climate, the idea of a full Senatorial term of six years was never alluring, but I should have preferred not to be cut short in my second session by a defeat in the Legislature, as it is now not unlikely. I am, as usual, between several fires. Webster and I are on perfectly good terms, but some of his peculiar friends regard me with a basilisk eye, and bitterly reproach my not having followed in his footsteps. On the other hand, the Free Soilers are in no humor to forgive my old opposition to them, nor my recent vote for the Boundary Bill. Webster, by the way, is at Marshfield, — 'the sick lion,' — with a good many beasts flocking to his den. I have not seen him yet, but I hear he is cross, an infallible sign of convalescence.

[Nov. 12.] 'Into what pit thou seest, from what height fallen!' The telegraph will have told you the result. We are beaten, horse, foot, and dragoons, — or, in other words, Governor, Senate, and House, though the latter is a little uncertain. I feared it would come to this. Taylor's platform was as far as Massachusetts would go, whether under Webster's lead or that of anybody else. Indeed, I am to have a vicarious punishment and take the fall which was arranged for him. As I had originally purposed quitting Washington next March, it matters little. But I grieve for the good old cause, wounded in the house of its friends, — by what agencies and influences history will pronounce. I grieve for the good old Commonwealth, which seems likely to be the subject of that sort of reform which was practised by certain daughters of antiquity upon their aged parent. You remember the old story of their cutting him to pieces and boiling him in a caldron, to make him young again.

[1] The ablest defence of the Massachusetts Coalition is to be found in Henry Wilson's "Rise and Fall of the Slave Power;" the most effective exposure of it in an Address to the People by the Whig Members of the Legislature in 1851, written by Benjamin R. Curtis, afterward a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

[Dec. 11.] For the Massachusetts Legislature to do me justice would certainly be gratifying, but I do not think it would tempt me to stay here six years longer. One thing I *should* like, — and that is, to be rightly understood on the vexed questions of the day. Never was there a time when moderate men were more liable to be misconstrued. Some of our own friends are in an inflammatory state of vigilance, and even agitation, upon all these matters. They must put down everybody who differs from them, or who does not keep silence when they cry 'hush.' In these momentous times, they are the most clamorous advocates of silence, the most belligerent champions of peace, and the most discordant defenders of harmony. '*Si vis flere, flendum est*' was a maxim of Horace and Quintilian, both for poets and orators. If you wish harmony, you must be harmonious. If you wish peace, you must not yourself quarrel. If you desire to stop agitation, you must lay your finger on your own lips. This is good philosophy in all ages. But certain of our great and small men seem not to think so, and are sounding their rams' horns in every direction, ostensibly to keep the walls of Jericho standing, but in reality to signalize their own prowess.

[Dec. 31.] Webster's Austrian manifesto is, in some respects, a grand paper; though I think that if Great Britain had sent an agent to watch the progress of South Carolina Nullification, with a view to making a commercial treaty at the earliest moment, we should not have shrunk from denouncing him as a spy. Clay's opposition to the extra copies is the first symptom of the revival of the old rivalry. They are both again bent on being candidates, — not remembering that candidates are not always Presidents. Webster's New Englander was a rouser, and in his best style of after-dinner oratory; but I should have liked it better if, this time, his Union safety-valve had been shut off. So ends 1850. Another hour will bring us to a new figure in the units' place. Who can say what is in store for us in the

coming year, or whether its numerals shall be inscribed on our official or on our personal tombstones? The readiness is all.

[Jan. 12, 1851.] I agree with you in distrusting the sincerity of Caleb Cushing, who is probably only *possuming*. If I had the privilege of naming a Free-Soil successor, it would be Samuel Hoar, who is the most respectable man of his party. Morton, or Mills, too, I could cheerfully make way for. Even S. C. Phillips, or Mann, would not nauseate me. But, I confess, my stomach revolts from Sumner. At any rate, whatever is done or left undone, I hope the short-term vacancy will soon be filled. I sit daily, like Damocles at the feast, with the sword suspended by a hair above my head. The sooner it falls, the better.

[Jan. 19.] The Baltimore 'Sun' says, that as my recent votes are precisely what Sumner's would have been, the substitution of Sumner for Winthrop is not so much to be dreaded! Webster, too, criticises my action in voting to refer John P. Hale's petitions to the Judiciary Committee; but my belief is that by laying them on the table we should only have given rise to fruitless agitation. . . . B. R. Curtis has been here, and dined with me, when I strongly advised postponing the long-term vacancy until next winter. As our Legislature is now constituted, and after the developments of corruption and bargaining which have been witnessed, nobody can be elected without being involved in a suspicion of having ploughed with another man's heifer. Boutwell's message is well written, and more conservative than I had expected. He means to be Governor next year, and I dare say will be. Since writing the above, I attended morning service at the Capitol, to hear the famous Dr. Hawks. He preached a 'Union' sermon, powerful in parts, but interceding for the Union as if it were on the very verge of dissolution; and now, I suppose, he will claim the credit of having saved it. The mischief of all this is, that at a moment when there is really no danger, great as it may have been, we are exhaust-

ing our pathos to such a degree that when the next serious cause for alarm arises we shall be mute and empty.

[Jan. 31.] The 30th of January is memorable in English history as the day of the 'Execution of the Blessed Martyr,' otherwise Charles I. It will be memorable in my private calendar as the day when a corrupt Coalition put a not unwelcome end to my Congressional career. Precedents oblige me not to leave Massachusetts without representation, so here I sit in the Senate waiting for Rantoul's arrival. Do you remember, ever so long ago, in the days when he and I used to hammer one another in the Legislature, how I once called him in debate 'a little *Matadore*, shaking his red flag in my face'? And now he comes to oust me from my curule chair. You do not always appreciate my puns, but if I dared assimilate myself to an eagle, I might suggest a passable one: —

> 'An Eagle, towering in his pride of place,
> Was by a mousing (Rant) owl hawked at and killed.'

During this last session Mr. Winthrop's speeches related to fiscal and other questions which need not be described. He left the Senate on the 7th of February, but did not immediately break up his establishment in Washington. The long-term vacancy not having been filled, he found himself still a candidate, though with no expectation of proving a successful one. It was not until the 24th of April that the protracted contest in the Legislature came to an end, the twenty-sixth and final ballot having been as follows:

Whole number of votes cast	384
Necessary to a choice	193
Charles Sumner (Coalition)	193
Robert C. Winthrop (Whig)	166
Scattering	25

[Feb. 17.] You see there has been a rumpus and a riot in Boston, an escape from the Marshal, etc. It is lamentable to have such a triumph given to Nullification and Rebellion, yet, I confess, I never believed that Union meetings and all that sort of thing were going to cure the deep-seated disaffection which the Fugitive Law has engendered.

[March 24.] The newspapers having hailed my return home as 'a plain Republican citizen after so many years' service in the public councils,' Choate characteristically greeted me with the remark that he could not see that I was any *plainer* than before. Franklin Dexter wanted to get up a public dinner, but I would not hear of it. I have, however, consented to sit for my bust.

[May 3.] Morey[1] and other friends wish to run me for Governor in the autumn, a sort of rallying of the Whigs for the redemption of the Commonwealth under my lead. I do not altogether fancy the plan, for although I would back myself for a 20,000 plurality, yet our Massachusetts law requires a majority over all others, failing which, the election goes to the Legislature, where my chances would be dubious. Aside from this, with my present habits, the office would have no charms. To *have been* Governor of Massachusetts, at an interval of more than two hundred years after my great ancestor, would be a pleasant historical coincidence; but to be tethered to a little round of petty duties, daily drudgery in the council-chamber, riding on big horses, sitting in big chairs, and making big and little speeches all over the Commonwealth, would now be distasteful, if not irksome, to me. . . . A story went the rounds here a week or two ago, that Clay had openly said in Washington, that he saw 'nothing to choose between Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Sumner.' Now, that Clay may have unkindly remembered my vote against his Compromise is eminently probable, — that he and other Southern friends regretted much of my course in the Senate

[1] Hon. George Morey, long chairman of the Whig State Central Committee.

is certain, — but that he seriously said what is reported I am slow to believe, and I wish you would confidentially ascertain what he did say.[1] I dare say that both Clay and Webster suspected me of having used my influence as Speaker to get Taylor nominated. I did no such thing, but scrupulously abstained from any interference; though when the nomination was made, and still more when Taylor was fairly elected, I felt bound to support him and his policy so far as I conscientiously could. I stood by him living, and could see nothing in his death to make me change my ground. Hence my opposition to Clay's bill.

[June 14.] Our Boston men keep the incense burning under Webster's nose with more than the assiduity of vestal virgins. A few months ago they were satisfied with a position of defence, but they now assume the attack and are for driving others to the wall. Such a course can only end by damaging the party irretrievably. What steps John Davis and others will take, I do not yet know, but I shall not long submit in silence to such insinuations as are made; though they come from hangers-on and underlings, whose names you never heard of. There is, besides, a fellow who writes Boston letters to the New York 'Herald,' containing malicious fabrications, which are apparently concocted for the purpose of sowing dissensions among Whigs to the profit of their opponents.

[July 28.] Crittenden has been on a visit to me and we have had much interesting conversation about public affairs, of which I shall have a good deal to tell you when we meet. . . . I am somewhat puzzled about my gubernatorial candidacy, which some Websterites are openly opposing, the 'Courier' proclaiming that I have not a particle of popularity about me! Morey, on the other hand (whose position and experience render him a judge), says that I am the only man upon whom the Convention could possibly unite at the

[1] Mr. Clay denied having said anything of the kind. The remark was traced to Senator Foote of Mississippi.

outset, and the only one who would have the slightest chance of election. I would give much for a long talk with Webster, to know precisely how he feels, if he chose to tell me. Letter-writing is of little use in such cases. My own inclination is not to seem to dodge a downfall, or evade another defeat, by declining to run, if my friends urge it. The party has done much for me in the past, and I must do what I can for it now. I need not stand a second year.

[Newport, Aug. 11.] Judge Dayton is here. He saw at Worcester both John Davis and Levi Lincoln, who told him that the opposition to me was factitious and feeble. At Nahant he met Frank Gray, who told him Webster was in favor of me for Governor above all other men! On the heels of this appeared George T. Curtis, to whom I frankly complained of the way in which certain hangers-on of Webster had assailed me. He replied that he regretted it, that Webster had asked him to say to me that he was as much my friend as ever, but that he doubted the expediency of running me for Governor for a couple of years, for the reason that it *might have a bad effect on the South, particularly in Georgia.* This reference to Georgia I thought a little comical, as Toombs is engaged in supporting a Democrat for Governor there, the local Whig party being practically disbanded. I told Curtis I would consider the subject, but that the message should have come earlier, that I was partly committed, etc. I think I shall hold my tongue and let things take their course. Massachusetts Whigs can surely nominate whom they please in a bye-year without consulting Southern opinion.[1]

[Sept. 29.] We found at Lowell, instead of a cattle-show, a sort of miniature World's Fair. So I left out all my talk about bullocks and manure, and substituted a few commonplaces about Arts and Manufactures. Everett made a beautiful speech, with perhaps a little too much Latin for his

[1] The Whig State convention of 1851 was held at Springfield on the 11th of September. Upon the first ballot for Governor, Mr. Winthrop received 811 votes, to 210 for Samuel H. Walley, the Webster candidate.

audience. There is nobody like him for such occasions. He shines out *velut inter ignes luna minores*. Not that I mean to imply that he is given to moonshine, for he is really splendid and shines with no borrowed light.

[Oct. 26.] I sent you my Mechanic Charitable Address. I have made three or four more, Agricultural and otherwise, but nothing political. 'These little things are great to little men.' From all I can learn, Fillmore is the favorite of the Southern Whigs, but if you read your New York 'Herald' duly, you will see that Crittenden spent a week with me for the purpose of negotiating matters for Scott! The leading Free-Soil organ here says I am very ambitious, a mere politician, and ready to make any sacrifice for advancement, but if the writer only knew how sick I am of the emptiness and distraction of public life, he would give me credit for less management.[1] Morey is still sanguine about the election, but Clifford is a perfect Cassandra. For myself, I am *utrumque paratus*. There are so many things which I wish to do, but which I cannot do if I am chosen, and so many things which I don't wish to do, but which I must do if I serve, that the *pros* and *cons* have a tendency to leave me in a state of apathy.

[Nov. 20.] My vote was a glorious one, 8,000 more than Briggs got last year, and nearly 4,000 more than Taylor received three years ago, — and this in the largest vote ever thrown in the State, and in spite of much lukewarmness, and

[1] The reference is to a leader in the Boston "Commonwealth" of Oct. 25, 1851, dealing at length with Mr. Winthrop's career, and describing him as a man "whose sympathies are with the rich, — with the money power; his aim, like theirs, political success as an end, not as a means; his method of gaining it, like theirs, tortuous, uncandid, false; his principles, like theirs, sitting loosely on him, enabling him always to present that front which circumstances may seem to demand for the moment. He never knew what it was to earn his own bread, and he is far removed from any knowledge of, or sympathy with, the great mass of the community whose lot is so different. He is thus almost the only man of any note in New England who is *a politician by profession*."

probably some defection, in a quarter you wot of. Indeed, but for the unaccountable loss of Lowell, we should have controlled the General Court. My plurality over Boutwell exceeds 20,000, over Palfrey nearly 36,000; but, with our majority system, a coalition can elect a minority candidate in the Legislature, which will probably prove the case in January. My friends say 'better luck next time,' but between ourselves there is not likely to be any next time for me. I am tired of it all and mean to stand aside for several years, if not permanently. Clifford would make an excellent Whig Governor. So would Charles Hudson or Julius Rockwell. I might easily name others. Say nothing of this, as it will not be made public for some time. . . . People here are, as usual, all agog for making Webster President, but you and I think alike as to his chances. I am ready to vote for him, for Fillmore, for Scott, or for any other good man who may receive the nomination, and I have as little fancy as you for Free-Soil alliances; but we are doomed to defeat under almost any imaginable circumstances. It looks to me as if the Democrats were as sure to carry the next general election, as the seasons are to roll round. Though not technically a Webster Whig, I would have given much to have seen Webster President before he died, but he will now never get even as many electoral votes as he got in 1836. Strange that so great a man should occasionally be so blind to political situations; besides which, I have some doubt if his life is worth a year's insurance.

The story above alluded to, that Mr. Winthrop had co-operated with John J. Crittenden in trying to effect the nomination of General Scott, together with another story (not improbably from the same source) that he had strongly recommended running Fillmore in preference to Webster, found its way from time to time into the newspapers in the winter of 1852, sometimes

accompanied by the insinuation that Mr. Winthrop, although fully consulted by Mr. Webster before his 7th of March speech, had purposely left his great leader in the lurch. Mr. Winthrop was much stung by this charge, but preferred not to take any notice of it, until he saw in a New York paper a report of some remarks of Mr. Webster, in which no names were mentioned, but which might have been construed as giving a sort of color to what had been said. Under date of March 15, 1852, he accordingly wrote Mr. Webster: —

I have no disposition to draw you into private or public controversy, but I must be perfectly candid in saying to you that, in answer to frequent questions at the time and since, whether I was consulted by Mr. Webster on the subject of his speech *before* it was delivered, or whether he communicated to me in advance his views and purposes in making it, — I have uniformly replied in the negative. On the other hand, I had many reasons for supposing, when I myself made a speech just a fortnight previously, on the 21st of February, that, in taking distinct ground in favor of General Taylor's platform, I was expressing myself in conformity to your views, and that I should be found acting where I had always been proud to act, under your lead.[1] I cannot but think that, if the report of your remarks be correct, you are under some misapprehension as to what occurred *before*, and what *after*, the 7th of March, 1850.

A temporary absence from Washington and a pressure of public business prevented Mr. Webster from replying until April 8, when he wrote: —

"It is certainly true that you were not consulted upon the subject of my speech before it was delivered, and that I did not communicate to you in advance my views and purposes

[1] See *ante*, pp. 110–111.

in making it. At the same time, I am at a loss to know what reason you had for supposing, on the 21st of February, that I was in favor of General Taylor's platform. Before that time, and in a long conversation with General Taylor, — the only one I ever had with him on any matter of importance, — I distinctly stated to him that I did not at all concur with him in his views; that I was for one general and final adjustment of all the questions; and that, as for the admission of California, leaving all other questions equally important to be discussed and quarrelled about thereafter, I thought such a proceeding very likely to lead to civil war. It gave me infinite pain to differ with you, and the rest of my colleagues, on that exigent and critical occasion. Certainly I doubted not the patriotism and good purposes of any of you. But the path of my own duties seemed plain, and I was ready to tread it at all hazards. The consequence was that I found myself engaged in a controversy of great moment, to be fought on a field in which I had neither a leader nor a follower from among my own immediate friends.

"And now let me add, my dear sir, that there is no man in whose public career I have heretofore taken more interest and concern than in yours. I have known and appreciated your intelligence, your patriotism, your fitness for high public employment. I have ever spoken of you as one from whom the country had much to expect, and I still cherish the fervent hope that you may yet enjoy in full measure the rich reward of public approbation for distinguished public services."

Under date of April 14, Mr. Winthrop rejoined: —

I thank you for the kind expressions with which your letter concludes. It is in vain for me to conceal that the tone of some of those in this quarter, who are supposed to enjoy your confidence, had conspired with other circumstances in leading me to doubt in what relation to you I was at liberty to class

myself. This must account for anything of unaccustomed formality in my last letter. I gladly accept the renewed assurance of your friendly regard. You must allow me to say, however, that there are still some points of difference between us in relation to the history of the past. My first impulse was to sit down and write you a full account of the reasons which I had for thinking that, on the 21st of February, 1850, I was expressing your sentiments as well as my own. I had proposed also to state some facts and views which rendered it all but impossible that you could have entertained, at that time or for many weeks afterward, the strong and unqualified opinions as to the danger of adopting General Taylor's plan, which you now express. I am reluctant, however, to trouble you with any long statements or arguments upon a subject of no immediate practical interest, while you are so much occupied with official and professional duties. If the time should come when I should be in the way of meeting you personally on our old footing, and when you should be willing and disposed for a free conference upon those questions, I am certain I could remind you of circumstances which, I dare say, left less impression on your mind than upon my own, but which were hardly susceptible of misconstruction.

The only political speech of any importance made by Mr. Winthrop in 1852 was on the 29th of June in Faneuil Hall, when he presided at a meeting to ratify the nomination of General Scott for the Presidency by the General Convention of the Whig party at Baltimore, and when, in their bitter disappointment, many Webster Whigs had threatened to bolt the ticket. I quote but a few sentences: —

We have come together as Whigs, — not merely Boston Whigs, and Massachusetts Whigs, but national Whigs, — members of a party coextensive with our whole widespread

Union. We are here not forgetting that we have principles to maintain, which are far above all consideration of persons; that we have a cause and a country to support and uphold, independently of all questions about individual pretensions or preferences. We all know that if Daniel Webster had been nominated by the National Convention, and if this meeting had been summoned to respond to that nomination, this hall, capacious and elastic as it is, would not have contained the multitudes who would have crowded and thronged its portals. We should all have been here, and the 'Old Cradle' would have rocked again, as in its infancy, with your exulting shouts. And shall it be said, for a moment, that the Whigs of Suffolk were only true to their colors when their own wishes were gratified, and when their own candidates were successful? Shall it be said of us, as it was once said of ancient Rome, that Octavius had a party, and Antony a party, but that the Republic had no party? I observe that when a procession of Baltimore Whigs meet your own procession of delegates at the gates of the Monumental city, they marched beneath a banner bearing this inscription: 'We go for the nominee.' That escort was accepted; and that banner was not repudiated. And upon the walls of the vast Assembly-room where the delegates were convened there was inscribed, if I mistake not, our old watchword of victory in 1840, 'The union of the Whigs for the sake of the Union.' All this, I am persuaded, was no mere empty and delusive show. It meant something. And the meaning was nothing else, and could have been nothing else, than that which our State Convention and our Legislative Convention, and all our local conventions, had previously declared, — that we intended to abide by the decision of the tribunal to which we had appealed, and to give our support to the candidates which it should select. Shall we break our swords and abandon our colors and go over to the enemy, because we cannot have the precise leader of our choice to conduct us to victory? Shall we abandon the cause of American industry,

of river and harbor improvements, and of a sound pacific foreign policy, out of any mere personal griefs? Shall we overturn the coach because we cannot have our own favorite driver, or even because we may not exactly fancy some of our fellow-passengers? For myself I can only say that, let who will be on the box or who will get up behind, let who will be inside and who outside, as long as it keeps along on the straight road and in the well-worn ruts of the Constitution, I am for holding fast to the good old Whig Union line. . . . Let us then take the first step to confirm and carry out the acts to which we ourselves have been parties. Let us prove that no degree or depth of personal disappointment can prevent us from keeping our plighted troth with the Whigs of other States, or from doing unto others what we should have expected and demanded of others to do unto us.

A few weeks later, by an appointment of the Alumni of Harvard, he delivered at their decennial celebration, July 22, 1852, an elaborate address, entitled, The Obligations and Responsibilities of Educated Men in the use of the tongue and of the pen.

[Nahant, July 23.] Thank Heaven, no orator is expected to deliver *two* Alumni Addresses. Mine was on the easel a long time and I gave it a daub now and then, but somehow or other the colors had a tendency to dry on the palette. It has some tolerable passages, and some good sober truths, which the times require. The height of the pulpit and the immediate proximity of our venerable Chief Justice (who occasionally purred applause) interfered somewhat with my gesticulation; and then, too, I am not accustomed to be hampered by a manuscript, which the length of this production necessitated for part of the time. Charles G. Loring was kind enough to say I had done more good than had been done by any address at Harvard for thirty years, while Everett was overwhelming in his approbation; but one must

deduct a large percentage from the congratulations of friends.[1] In spite of remonstrances from Morey, John C. Gray, and others, I adhere to the purpose I privately expressed many months ago of not running again for Governor, though I am assured there is little or no doubt that we shall this year control the Legislature. Aside from my weariness of politics, I am for harmony in the party. The disappointment of the Websterites is disposed to exhibit itself in vengeance upon everybody who dares intimate that it was anything less than treason to say that Fillmore *would have* made a good candidate, or that Scott *is* a good one. If I really wanted the office, I would defy this intolerance and take the stump, but I grow more and more enamoured of private life and see various channels in which I may be useful. Give my cordial remembrances to the President and tell him that his course since the nomination has given him a fresh hold on the hearts of his friends. No man has so much right to complain of the result as he, but he has proved that he knows how to bear the *downs*, as well as the *ups*, of political fortune.

Mr. Winthrop's withdrawal excited much comment. The Boston correspondent of the Springfield "Republican" wrote as follows, under date of Aug. 9, 1852:

"Mr. Winthrop's action has stirred the political waters. Not unexpected to the knowing ones, it took the public at large by surprise. He was looked upon as the next Governor of Massachusetts, as but for his imperative declination, his

[1] No such allowance need be made in the case of opponents. A leader in the Boston "Commonwealth" of July 27, 1852, says: "We have read Mr. Winthrop's Oration before the Alumni of Harvard with a feeling of very agreeable surprise. In power and beauty, in elevation of thought and principle, in force and grace of expression, it will take its place in the foremost ranks of American eloquence. No competent person can read it, and honestly deny Mr. Winthrop's claim to as high a position among our orators and writers as is held by any other living man. It is masterly in style, and glows throughout with what we are ready to accept, for the most part, as sound, patriotic, and truly Christian sentiment."

nomination by the Whig Convention would have been almost an act of spontaneous unanimity, and his subsequent election quite equally a matter of course. For it must be impossible that the Coalition, hoary with political sin and inconsistency, though but two years in existence, should longer blot the fame of Massachusetts and be a stench in the nostrils of the nation. Mr. Winthrop does not decline because he would not like to be Governor. This is an ambition worthy of and honorable to him. But he prefers the harmony and the unity of the party to his own advancement. He prefers, too, not to be the object of a rancorous spite and a party jealousy, that, because he could not agree to follow the lead of some of his old political associates, has been poured out upon him during the past year and has threatened to pursue him still more bitterly. Mr. Winthrop is no political idol of mine. I have differed from him on questions of policy in relation to men and measures, — I think he has made mistakes in his political course, — but that he is a true, staunch, reliable, devoted Whig, firm and inflexible in his devotion to the essentials of the Whig creed, broad and generous in his nationality, yielding and sacrificing in his personal feelings for the sake of the greater good, — that he is all this, and that he deserves well of the Whigs of Massachusetts and of the Union, I do confidently assert and insist. . . . What part Mr. Winthrop took in securing General Scott's nomination, I know not. I doubt if it was active or large; but, nevertheless, he seemed to be the mark against which the sadly disappointed feelings of many of Mr. Webster's supporters here turned with an idea of 'revenge,' which appears to me as senseless and illiberal as it is unjust. Out of Boston scarcely any man would command more votes than Mr. Winthrop, while here in Boston his generous conduct and manly sacrifice will have the effect to strengthen and reunite the old Whig phalanx."

Extracts from Mr. Winthrop's private letters are here resumed: —

[Sept. 7.] In an evil hour I some time ago consented to discourse at length upon American Agriculture at Taunton, on the 18th of next month.[1] The heat has caused me to defer preparation for it, and I am now repenting my good nature. I gave a note to you to a representative of the Boston 'Atlas,' who visits Washington in hopes to have the proscription of that paper removed. You know all about this business. The 'Atlas' is a thoroughgoing Whig paper, energetic and impulsive. Not always prudent, but always prompt. Not always cautious, but always courageous. Many things in it have at times displeased many of its friends, but, on the whole, no paper has been more devoted to the Whig cause. It did not cry Shibboleth to the Compromise, nor Amen to the 7th of March, yet it has given manly support to the Administration, and is uncompromising in its adherence to the Baltimore Convention and its candidates. Webster took away his patronage and gave it to the 'Courier,' and its editors now feel that an occasional official notice in its columns would do away with the impression that the Administration is throwing its weight into the scale of the Webster sizzle in this quarter, and would give emphasis to the 'Atlas' in sustaining Scott. It is too important a paper to be put under a ban. . . . I don't think you quite do justice to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' Greatly as political agitation of the slavery question is to be deprecated, ought there not, now and then, to be something said in a literary or moral way, to keep alive a

[1] Mr. Winthrop was long a Trustee of the Massachusetts Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, of which his father had been president. His agricultural tastes were acquired when a small boy on Naushon Island, then the property of a maternal uncle of his, and where he often went for weeks at a time. Sheep-farming was then practised there on a considerable scale, and Mr. Winthrop's earliest suit of clothes was made from the Island wool. These leanings were further developed by his first wife's having inherited the Gardner farm in Wenham, where during her life he habitually spent a part of each summer. His subsequent marriages associated him, first, with a farm in Dorchester, now built over, and later with a country seat in Brookline, where he much resided for many years, and took constant pleasure in its horticultural attractions.

proper state of sentiment in regard to the real character of the institution? The book may be a good deal exaggerated in some parts, but I think it exhibits some of the lights as well as shades of slavery, and does great justice to some features of Southern character. It will do no harm to inculcate in the young Southern mind (which I think it will reach) a feeling of impatience at the idea that slavery is to be perpetual. You must not judge of the work only by the ravings of Anti-slavery Conventions.

[Oct. 25.] I returned from my sister's at Augusta just in time to meet the appalling announcement of Webster's imminent peril. Last night I dreamed that I was exchanging with him renewed assurances of mutual confidence and regard, but I awoke to the sound of minute-guns and tolling bells, which announced his end. It has affected me deeply. I could have cried about it all day with a good will, especially if my tears could have blotted out a few things from the eventful record which has just been closed. What a man he might have been! Yet let us not do injustice, or forget what a man he *was*. Mighty in intellect, majestic in form, untiring in energy, — the impress of greatness was upon him all over in larger characters than have appeared anywhere within our region and within our day. One could never see him, or hear him, without thinking of Hamlet's apostrophe to man. 'How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in apprehension how like a god!' It is twenty-four years since I entered his law-office, and until last year, rarely a month has passed without my being more or less associated with him. He has not always treated me as I could have wished, or as I think I deserved. I owe him nothing, though perhaps I have to thank his friends for my defeat for Governor. But I rejoice to think he has never wanted a good turn from me, whenever I had a real opportunity of doing him one. I should be willing to compare notes to-day with the most forward of those who have been seeking fame from his friendship, or making capital out of his infirmities, or stealing

notoriety from his very death-bed, — as to the amount of real service which has been rendered him by us respectively during nearly a quarter of a century past. I have always made great allowances for any expressions of irritation he may latterly have let fall about my course, at moments when he was ill and disappointed; but I am, as you know, a sensitive man, and the malice of some of his retainers has galled me deeply. Enough, perhaps too much, of this.

[Nov. 29.] This will be handed you by my particular friend Clifford, who will be chosen Governor of Massachusetts as soon as our Legislature meets. Let him know some of the secrets which you may not be disposed to trust on paper. I was profoundly astonished by the telegraphic gossip that I was a candidate for the State Department. Fillmore knows how I feel about this; and if any politicians in this quarter pressed my name, it was without my knowledge and against my wishes. I fully supposed Crittenden would succeed Webster, and there are reasons why this might have been the wisest choice; but Everett is admirably qualified to finish up Webster's work and was cut out for a minister of Foreign Affairs. You will have noted that I headed the Scott ticket in this State. His defeat has been laughably overwhelming, but I rejoice that his vote in the Electoral College will be divided between two sections of the Union, Vermont and Massachusetts standing shoulder to shoulder with Tennessee and Kentucky. Let us hope we shall learn a little wisdom during the next four years.

[Jan. 13, 1853.] So our friend Mrs. —— says I am 'repining at my political reverses.' I could make a shrewd guess at the source of that suggestion. Oddly enough your letter came when a political prize was again within my reach. John Davis's term expiring in March, and he having fully decided to retire, I was strongly urged to allow myself to be put in nomination and I was assured that this time my election would be certain, in spite of some opposition from Webster Whigs in the Convention. I confess I was a little

tempted, but on thinking the whole matter carefully over, I determined to adhere to my original decision to eschew all candidacies for some years to come, if not permanently. I have no longer a house in Washington, and I have not the faintest wish to go back there, save on an occasional visit to you or some personal friend. There are all sorts of reasons, domestic and otherwise, which dispose me to remain quietly here. Nevertheless, I would go if I really felt I could accomplish anything; but what good could I do, with Frank Pierce in the White House and a democratic majority in both branches? My votes and my speeches would fail, as heretofore, to satisfy extremists, and I should be at continual variance with my own colleague. It is understood that Everett is not unwilling to accept, and he is a man upon whom we can all agree. Whether he will long fancy such a post, in the present condition of the country, I have my doubts. I will not affect to deny that, after an absence of eleven winters, Boston occasionally seems a trifle narrow and a trifle humdrum. The gatherings of our Historical Society, of the vestry of Trinity Church and other local bodies, are perhaps a little tame to one who has passed so many years at work on the affairs of the Nation. But I am getting thoroughly accustomed to it all, and I see many ways in which I can be useful, to say nothing of the opportunity of undertaking some long-postponed biographical work, and freedom to go to Europe when it suits me. I enclose my letter to Judge Warren [1] declining to stand.

VIII.

Although Mr. Winthrop was now, by his own choice, not in what is technically known as "public life," — the tenure of, or candidacy for, a National or State office, — it was in no degree his intention to hold his tongue on

[1] Our former associate, Charles H. Warren, then President of Massachusetts State Senate.

the great questions of the day; and though, in the course of the next twelve years, his various public utterances gradually assumed more and more a historical, educational, philanthropic, or religious character, yet when properly urged, or when he felt it to be a duty, he had no hesitation in expressing his political views, sometimes in a platform speech, sometimes in a published letter. Thus, on the 28th of September, 1853, in presiding over the Whig State Convention at Fitchburg, he indulged in some plain-spoken criticism of the Massachusetts Coalition, in a speech from which I quote a single passage: —

I am not so bigoted a partisan as to grudge to our adversaries an occasional possession of power, either in the nation at large, or in our own State. I am willing to admit that the revolutions of parties in a free country are sometimes productive of positive good, and that the rolling wheel of political fortune is sometimes a wheel of progress and reform. And, let me add, I am always ready to welcome a true progress and a just reform, from whatever quarter it may come, and by whatever rotation it may be accomplished. But I confess, when I reflect on the doubtful and dangerous counsels to which our country has been recently committed; when I think of the perils which may be at this moment impending over our foreign and domestic relations, from the extravagant and reckless policy of some of those who occupy the high places of the nation; and when, still more, I contemplate the injury which has been inflicted upon the character of our own Massachusetts, as a State, and the even deeper and more permanent injury which is just ready to be inflicted on our own Massachusetts' Constitution, — I cannot help deploring the day which introduced divisions and distractions into the ranks of a party, which ought to have saved, which might have saved, both State and Nation. I cannot help deploring the

day which saw that party throw away the opportunity of saving anything, in order to indulge in mere personal dissensions and family feuds.

A few weeks earlier, on the 6th of September, he had delivered an address at Groton, in Connecticut, at the celebration of the seventy-second anniversary of the Revolutionary tragedy of Groton Heights, and a few weeks later, on the 11th of November, he made an *extempore* speech at a "Faneuil Hall Rally" of the Whigs of Boston, in opposition to the proposed new State Constitution.[1] On the 29th of the last-named month he delivered, by request of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association, the opening lecture of a course of lectures upon the Application of Science to Art, entitling it "Archimedes and Franklin." Towards the close of it he strongly urged the erection of a statue of Benjamin Franklin in the place of his birth, an appeal which resulted in the existing statue in front of the City Hall, with the design and execution of which Mr. Winthrop had much to do, and the address at the unveiling of which was pronounced by him on the 17th of September, 1856.[2]

On the 21st of December, 1853, he delivered, before the Mercantile Library Association of Boston, a lecture upon Algernon Sidney, one of his favorite characters in history; and on the 23d of February, 1854, he made in Faneuil Hall, at short notice, a speech on the Repeal of

[1] The state of his health had obliged him to decline serving as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention.

[2] A former benefactor of this Society, Thomas Dowse, so greatly admired this lecture of Mr. Winthrop's, that he forthwith proceeded to put up at his own expense a monument to Franklin in Mount Auburn Cemetery.

the Missouri Compromise, earnestly deprecating what he considered the wanton violation of that compact.

[Oct. 14, 1853.] Thanks for your compliments about my Fitchburg speech. It is, however, one of the last flickerings of an expiring flame. 'I know not where is that Promethean fire that can that light relume,' and I may add that, if I did know, I should hesitate before applying the match. So far as many of the Boston delegation were concerned, my success was wrung from reluctant ears. Conscience-Whig and Free-Soil attacks were bad enough, but they were open; the whispered insinuations of some of the Webster clique are less endurable. They seem to consider injustice to me the only acceptable offering to the manes of their great idol. By the way, *apropos* of Free-Soilers, only think of John P. Hale 's preparing his last evening's speech in my library. He could find a full set of the 'Congressional Globe' nowhere else. My sense of hospitality prevented me from hinting to him that I thought I had better deserved a medal than he for efforts for Colored Seamen.

[Feb. 24, 1854.] I was somewhat reluctant to take part in yesterday's meeting, and only consented on the express understanding that doubtful points were to be avoided. Some of the speakers were disposed to glorify the Compromise of 1850, and I was forced to put in a *caveat*. You would have been edified if you had heard the applause when I alluded to my own course. Douglas has done a foolish thing, and it looks to me as if a black squall of the worst kind was coming up, which will, to say the least, throw a cloud over some presidential prospects. The only hope of doing anything is by a moderate and conciliatory tone. Seward's speech is able and discreet. Sumner's has, to my mind, so much tinsel and tawdry rhetoric that I have not yet waded through it, but there is unquestionably matter in it. If James A. Pearce could have seen his way clear to vindicate adherence to the Missouri Compromise (which seems to me little more than

the dictate of common honesty) he would take a stand at the North such as no other Southern man has enjoyed. I have no belief that slavery will make much headway in Kansas or Nebraska. But antislavery will make a prodigious headway in New England if such unwarrantable glosses are to prevail as to the construction of the Compromises of 1850. If I could have prescribed a recipe for reinflating Free-Soilism and Abolitionism, which had collapsed all over the country, I should have singled out this precise potion from the whole *materia medica* of political quackery.

[April 24.] I was the sole representative of the old mess at John Davis's funeral. There was a lamentable lack of attendance from Boston, and the Legislature treated it with scant courtesy. He was an able, faithful, disinterested public servant, not wanting in sagacity and shrewdness, but with that sort of wisdom which the good book says 'dwells with prudence.' Twenty years ago I was his *aide-de-camp*, and I was many years in Congress with him, where his sluggish temperament and seeming timidity sometimes disturbed me. Yet I believe that seeming timidity is often real boldness, and that his backwardness was the mere fault of his blood. He was a thoroughly honest man, and, upon the whole, I look back on his career and character with great respect and almost reverence, regarding him as inferior to few of our Massachusetts worthies of this century. His example was always good, and that gave effect to his precepts. There was a harmony between his words and works, and both were pure and patriotic.

[May 16.] Everett is looking wretchedly. When he told me privately of his contemplated resignation I remonstrated against his taking this step unless he really felt too ill to attend to his duties. Since then Abbott Lawrence has been here to say on behalf of the governor,[1] that if I would take Everett's place in the Senate, he would make out my com-

[1] Our former associate, Emory Washburn, was then governor.

mission forthwith. I declined with thanks, but Lawrence presented so many reasons in favor of my going that I consented to take a day or two to consider it, and consulted Nathan and William Appleton, as well as Ephraim Peabody. The upshot was that my original decision was not shaken. Indeed, I feel even less disposed for the post now than when I withdrew my candidacy in January of last year. Had I then been willing, I should have had the sanction of the Legislature and could have stayed in Washington as many years of the full term as I might see fit. Were I now to go, I should be but a gubernatorial nominee for some eight months, with great uncertainty of being confirmed in the end. Moreover, I should go on when the battle is raging, in one of the hottest months of the summer, and with an obligation to meet the requisitions of an imperious and impatient public sentiment in regard to Nebraska, Cuba, and I know not what all. I doubt whether my health is strong enough for plunging into that Washington furnace and going through the rough and tumble of an exciting midsummer session, but I should be willing to risk it if I could really see a chance of doing anything effective in a good cause. I am satisfied, however, that neither votes nor voices can prevail against the foregone conclusions of presidential behests and party subserviency. If I were already there and in the seat, I should feel called on to stay and bide my fortune, but to go on voluntarily under such circumstances is more than I can bring my mind to. If Everett cannot be persuaded to reconsider and go back, what is to be done? My own opinion is that, in such case, it would be best to select some man out of Boston — some one who might not care to run next winter — say, for instance, Briggs (if he would take it), Levi Lincoln, Charles Hudson, Grinnell, or Julius Rockwell, — all good men and true.

A few months later Mr. Winthrop received a very different offer, and one which much astonished him. Early

in September he was privately waited on by four persons of apparent respectability, none of whom he could remember to have met before, who represented themselves as empowered by the Massachusetts branch of the new "Know Nothing Order" to propose that, if he would consent to a private initiation into one of their "Lodges," he should be guaranteed the leadership of their party in the State, an election for governor in November, with the reversion of a Senatorship. He at first suspected some mystification, but becoming satisfied that the overtures were *bonâ fide*, he politely declined them, primarily on the ground that, from the very outset of his career, he had been opposed to secret political organizations, especially when based upon religion or race; but adding that although defeated for governor and senator in 1851, he had since good reason to consider both offices to have been within his reach, and had therefore no disposition at this late day to join a new party in order to obtain them.

I wonder [he subsequently wrote] how much authority these mysterious visitants really had and how far they were in a position to carry out their promises. If it be true that they have enlisted Wilson, they are not unlikely to become a power. He is far too shrewd to allow himself to be made a catspaw.[1]

Among a variety of non-political speeches made by him about this time, an address at the semi-centennial celebration of the New York Historical Society, Nov. 20,

[1] It is perhaps unnecessary to mention that the Know-Nothing party swept Massachusetts in November, 1854, not merely electing their candidates for State offices, but sending Henry Wilson to the United States Senate in the following winter.

1854, and one at the laying of the corner-stone of the Public Library of Boston, Sept. 17, 1855, may be alluded to in passing. He had been one of the earliest contributors of books to the last-named, and had consented, with some hesitation, to serve as chairman of a Board of Commissioners to erect a suitable building, a matter which occupied him a good deal for several years; and although the architect selected by a majority of his colleagues was not the one he preferred, and the edifice when completed was not wholly to his taste, yet he quite enjoyed these unaccustomed duties, finding that they brought him into contact with persons he might not otherwise have known, several of whom he remembered with much pleasure in later life. He was then also serving a term as an Overseer of Harvard, and an elaborate Report made by him on the establishment of the Plummer Professorship of Christian Morals and the office of Preacher to the University was printed in 1855. In it he took occasion to emphasize his belief that "the worship of God is the first thing, and not the last thing, to be provided for in a great seminary of learning; and the religious instructions of the Sabbath as much a part of any true system of education as the recitations and lectures of the week-day." In 1854 he was elected president of the Boston Provident Association, which had been founded, three years before, with a view of systematizing the charities of the city, and of endeavoring, by means of careful investigation, complete registration, and co-operation with other agencies, to prevent private liberality from being misapplied. This led him to accept, some years later, the laborious post of Chairman of the Board of Overseers of the Poor of Boston,

which he held a long time, taking a very active part in the administration and partial reorganization of that department of our municipal system. In April, 1855, he became president of the Massachusetts Historical Society, of which he had been elected a resident member so far back as 1839, and in which, from the first, he took a peculiar interest, partly because it is the oldest institution of its kind in this country, partly because his father long presided over it, and partly because he considered its publications invaluable to students of New England history. Its senior member at the present day did not enter the Society until nearly five years after Mr. Winthrop assumed the presidency, and our published proceedings are all that is left to bear testimony to the untiring diligence then displayed by him in improving the comfort of our surroundings, in promoting a more careful supervision of our books and manuscripts, in instilling new life into our meetings, and in gradually obtaining increased resources for our work.

After describing the breaking up of the Know-Nothing party, as a national organization, in the summer of 1855, Henry Wilson goes on to say : —

"On the adoption of the Southern platform a conference was held between Mr. Wilson, Mr. Bowles of the 'Springfield Republican,' and Col. Ezra Lincoln. Mr. Bowles had been an earnest and effective Whig; but he understood the purposes of those who had disrupted the American party, and was ready to unite with them in forming a party of freedom. Colonel Lincoln had been, too, one of the most earnest and sagacious leaders of the Whig party in Massachusetts. It was his judgment that the time had arrived for disbanding it, and for the formation of a new party, not only in Massachu-

setts, but throughout the country, on the basis of the Republican platform. Fully according in the sentiment as expressed by Mr. Wilson, that the time had come for combining the few thousand avowed Republicans, the anti-Nebraska Democrats, and antislavery 'Americans,' and that all that was necessary was for the Whigs to unite in the movement to control the policy of the State, they agreed that Mr. Winthrop was the man to take the lead in such an effort. Mr. Wilson urged these gentlemen to hasten home, see Mr. Winthrop, and urge upon him the necessity of prompt action. 'Tell him,' said Mr. Wilson, 'that we antislavery men want him and his friends to take the lead in forming a victorious Republican party in Massachusetts, that we are ready to make any sacrifices for the cause of freedom, that we will go into the ranks and work for victory, and that he and others may win and wear the honors of success.' But, though pressed to do so, Mr. Winthrop declined to join the movement proposed." [1]

In a letter to Ralph Waldo Emerson, dated Amesbury, July 3, 1854, John G. Whittier had written: —

"The circular signed by thyself and others has just reached me. Your movement I regard as every way timely and expedient. I have been for some time past engaged in efforts tending to the same object, — the consolidation of the antislavery sentiment of the North. For myself, I have nothing for names; I have no prejudices against Whig or Democrat, and am more than willing to take the humblest place in a new organization made up from Whigs, anti-Nebraska Democrats, and Free-Soilers. The great body of the people here are ready to unite in the formation of such a party. The Whigs especially only wait for the movement of the men to whom they have been accustomed to look for direction. I may be mistaken, but I fully believe that Robert C. Winthrop holds in his hands the destiny of the North. By throwing

[1] Rise and Fall of the Slave Power, vol. ii. p. 433.

himself on the side of this movement he could carry with him the Whig strength of New England."[1]

Mr. Winthrop had known Whittier as far back as when the latter was a Henry Clay Whig, and had now and then received letters from him expressing approval of particular speeches. The result was that, in spite of wide differences of political opinion, a friendly feeling still existed between them, and in a letter to Mr. Winthrop in the summer of 1855, Whittier had urged and amplified the views expressed in the above letter to Emerson. Similar appeals came to Mr. Winthrop from other sources, but he was unable to comply with them without doing violence to his convictions. His views on the subject are best expressed in his well-known letter on the "Fusion of Parties," the whole of which is to be found in the second volume of his collected works, and from which I here quote a few passages: —

I have no slavish devotion to party lines or party names. Who cares whether the organization under which we act be entitled Whig or Republican? Why, it can hardly be forgotten that most of us were Republicans before we were Whigs. *National Republicans*, — that was the old name of the Whig party. I trust there is not more meant than meets the ear, in the proposal to omit the first half of that old name. I trust that we shall go for the whole or none, and that we shall insist on being nothing less than *National* Republicans in fact, whatever we may suffer ourselves to be entitled. I can see no advantage, however, in changing names, unless there is to be some substantial change of policy or principle. The mere addition of another *alias* confers no honor upon individuals or parties, and does nothing to increase the confi-

[1] Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier, by S. T. Pickard, vol. i. p. 374.

dence with which they are regarded by the community. What substantial change, then, of principle or of policy is the Whig party of Massachusetts called on to adopt, or what change are they ready to adopt, even if they are called on?

I am not about to aver that the course of the Whig party has always been the very wisest, discreetest, and best, which could possibly have been pursued. The time has been — more than once, perhaps — when I could have desired some material modification of that course. But take it for all in all, — in the general direction it has pursued, and in the general results it has accomplished, — what party has existed in our day and generation which has been more pure, more patriotic, more faithful to the best interests of the country and the true principles of the Constitution? What party has ever included on its rolls and within its ranks a larger number of the most enlightened and devoted friends and defenders of our republic and its institutions? I know of none. I understand by the Whig party of Massachusetts, in the first place, a CONSTITUTIONAL party, — which regards the Union of the States, and the Constitution which is the formal condition and bond of that Union, as things — above all other things — to be respected and maintained. I understand it to be a party which, while it may perceive some provisions of that Constitution which it might wish to have been other than they are, yet recognizes and accepts the whole, every article of it, as of binding force and obligation, — and that not according to any arbitrary individual understanding, but according to solemn judicial interpretation, — which justifies no revocation, equivocation, or evasion in the official oath to support that Constitution, but demands the exact and scrupulous fulfilment of that oath by all who are privileged to take it on their lips. I understand by the Whig party of Massachusetts, in the second place, a party of LAW and ORDER, — which seeks reforms by no riotous or revolutionary processes, — which regards the great right of revolution as having been, once for all, asserted, and the great work of revolution, once

for all, accomplished, by those who have gone before us; and which looks henceforward, for the redress of occasional grievances, to the peaceful and legitimate operation of the republican institutions which they founded; which holds all nullification and disunion in utter abhorrence, and disclaims all sympathy with those who would burn constitutions and batter down courthouses. I understand by the Whig party of Massachusetts, in the third place, a party which consents to no bargain, and tolerates no traffic, as a means of securing office; which abominates all political trading and huckstering, whether for the promotion of measures or of men; and which looks with common aversion upon the congenial corruption which purchased a coalition triumph in the Legislature of Massachusetts, or a Nebraska triumph in the Congress of the United States. I understand by the Whig party of Massachusetts, in the fourth place, a party which looks to the advancement of our national prosperity and welfare, by a liberal administration of the public lands, by a discriminating adjustment and an honest and equal collection of the duties upon imports, and by seasonable and sufficient appropriations for the improvement of rivers and harbors. I understand by the Whig party of Massachusetts, in the fifth place, a party which has adopted and pursued the true WASHINGTON policy of observing good faith and justice towards all nations, and of cultivating peace and harmony with all; which would avoid all permanent antipathies and passionate attachments for other countries, and which, contenting itself with the vastness of our own territories, is opposed to every lawless scheme of foreign encroachment and aggrandizement. I understand by the Whig party of Massachusetts, in the sixth place, a party which demands the maintenance of equal representation and of an independent judiciary in our own Commonwealth, and which resists all tampering with our State Constitution for the purpose of breaking down the barriers of justice, or of transferring the legislative power of the State from the many to the few. And, finally, I understand by the Whig party of

Massachusetts a party which deplores the existence of domestic slavery within the limits of the American Union or anywhere else on the face of the globe; which, while it abstains from all unconstitutional and illegal interference with it whatever, would omit no legal effort to arrest and prevent its extension; which would rejoice to co-operate in any practicable method for its gradual and ultimate extinction, and to bear its share in any pecuniary sacrifices this might involve; which stands ready to resist any encroachment and aggression upon Northern rights; and which especially condemns and protests against the recent repudiation of the Missouri restriction and the reopening to slavery of a territory consecrated to freedom.

This is what I understand the Whig party of Massachusetts to have been, and still to be. And what is there in the present condition of public affairs which calls upon us to abandon such a party, and to enlist under the recruiting flag of a new one? As to the poor pretence that the Whig party is dead, it has been dealt with sufficiently by others. It is the old story of the profligate prince who stole the crown from the pillow of his royal parent to place it prematurely on his own brow, and of whom it was so well said that his wish was only father to the thought. . . . For myself, I do not hesitate to agree with the late Whig Convention that the greatest evils which the people of Massachusetts are at this moment called on to redress and remedy are those within their own immediate limits. To redeem this ancient Commonwealth from the disgrace with which she has been covered, to lift her up from the mire into which corrupt and huckstering politicians have plunged her, to erase from her records at least one act in direct and wanton violation of her constitutional obligations, and to replace her on that lofty eminence on which she so long stood, — this is the first duty of every true Massachusetts man. I cannot think this is to be done by the reelection of one half of the candidates of the very persons who have assisted in her degradation. I cannot think it is to be

done by the success of those who have openly proclaimed that no conformity is to be required upon this point, who have wholly omitted all allusion to it in their platform, and who have selected an entirely different and remote issue as the paramount and only issue for their consideration. Talk of omissions at this convention or that! What omission is so glaring and so monstrous as that which has ignored the whole condition and policy of our State government at a moment when these alone are the direct subject of our struggle, — when there is really no other 'practical and living issue' before us. I freely confess that I need no other inducement than this for adhering to the party with which I have been so long associated; a party which has ever been faithful to the honor and welfare of Massachusetts, and under whose auspices she first won that proud and pre-eminent title, at home and abroad, — already forfeited, I fear, — of 'the model State' of the American Union. If that title is ever to be regained, it will be under something less speckled and motley than a Fusion flag. If the good old bark is once more to be the pride of the seas, or the blessing of the Bay, she must put in for repairs to something safer and better than a sectional, floating dock. . . .

But we are urged to abandon our old colors, and rush wildly into the promiscuous ranks of a one-idea party, in order to promote some grand result connected with human liberty. Let us look at the new party for a single moment in this particular light, and see what claims it has to our confidence. Beyond all doubt, a great and grievous wrong was perpetrated by the passage of the Nebraska Bill. I united with others in protesting against it at the outset, and I have no words of palliation or apology for it now. It was an act of a character to put 'toys of desperation' into all our brains, to tempt us for the moment to break from all our old relations and to plunge into any policy which might hold out ever so delusive a hope of redress. But a sober second thought may lead us to inquire, What more can the Whigs of Massachusetts do on

that subject than they have done already? Their representatives opposed it at every stage of its progress by argument and by vote, while the very men who are now clamoring most loudly for their aid and alliance manifested their appreciation of such fidelity by lying in wait to undermine and overthrow them at the earliest moment. . . . And this brings me to my principal objection to the new party, and that is, its eminent adaptation to defeat the very ends at which it professedly aims. I am one of those who believe that the ultraism and recklessness of some of these old Free-Soil leaders, who are now calling on the whole people to sustain them in the offices which they have gained by every degree of indirection and indecency, have been the occasion of not a few of those very aggressions which they are so vociferous in condemning, and are destined to be the occasion of still new ones, if they are to be encouraged and strengthened in their fanatical career. No class of men in the country, either Northern or Southern, have, in my judgment, been more responsible for many of the measures which they have been loudest in denouncing, than your regular Northern agitators, who have at last alarmed the South into an idea of the absolute necessity of strengthening herself for the protection of her domestic institutions. Sometimes we know that the South has received the most direct and positive aid from this source. Nobody doubts that Texas was brought into the Union through the instrumentality of New York Free-Soilers, at least one of whom may be found at this moment among the leading Republican candidates in that State. Even the Nebraska Bill owed not a little of its success, in my opinion, to the fatuity of some of these ultra men. The violence to which they resorted, here and elsewhere, but particularly here, in resisting the Fugitive-Slave Law, produced the impression that the North intended to keep no faith on any point. And when at length this Nebraska Bill was introduced, a handful of them precipitated themselves into the front ranks of the opposition, in a way to drive off the only persons who could have prevented its consummation.

They usurped a lead which belonged to others and gave an odor of abolition to the whole movement. From the moment I read their ill-advised manifesto, I despaired of seeing that Southern opposition to the measure which, under other circumstances, I fully and firmly believe we should have obtained. . . . It is not enough considered that the real retarders of any movement are often found among those who are claiming to be its leaders. Has it not been so in the case of Temperance? Has not excessive zeal and blind one-ideaism led at last to the enactment of laws which have created a general reaction and put back the cause of Temperance? Just so it has been, and will be again, with these ultraists in the cause of freedom. For one, I never witness one of their violent spasmodic agitations about slavery at the North without looking to see it followed by some fresh triumph at the South. . . . We had a grand rising about Texas, I remember, after it was irreparably annexed, and now we are to have a grand rally about the repeal of the Missouri restriction, after it is hopelessly accomplished. And while we are thus engaged, the South will be looking about them for some fresh chances of fortifying their institutions. Our ultraists will have succeeded in nothing but in alarming them afresh into a feeling that some new defences must be secured. They will have alienated and disgusted all the moderate and reasonable men among them and among ourselves; and with the aid of the Democracy, some fresh annexation of new territory, or some other repeal, if anything remains to be repealed, of the restrictions upon old territory, will be successfully attempted. Geographical parties will have been arrayed against each other, and thus the action and reaction of ultraism at both ends of the Union will go on to the end of the chapter, involving us in a never-ceasing series of mischievous and deplorable measures. And to this end we are called on to forget the past, to disregard all experience, and to rush into the formation of what has been elegantly denominated a great 'Backbone Party.' No: the vertebral column must support a sounder brain be-

fore I can desire to see it assuming anything of additional strength and solidity. Better let it remain as fragmentary and fleshless as that of some fossil reptile of the coal measures, if it is only to be employed as an instrument for disjointing the carefully compacted framework of our national body politic, or if it is forever to serve as a bone of contention among those who ought to be able to live together in harmony and concord. One thing I long ago resolved on in my own political career, and that is, *never to give countenance or support to any policy or any party which tends in my conscientious conviction towards disorganization or disunion.*

. . . Let me only add, that I am not ready to concur with any expressions of disparagement or contempt which the heat of debate may have elicited from anybody for those old friends of ours who have parted from us somewhat suddenly and unexpectedly. I regret the loss of every man of them, and I heartily wish they were all back again among us to help us in our future struggles. There are many of them with whom I have agreed better about some things than I have with those that have stayed behind. For many of them I have the warmest personal regard, and though we may now seem to be pursuing different and divergent paths, I earnestly hope and trust we shall come out, one of these days, at the same Grand Junction, and be found travelling together again along the same old national highway.

This letter elicited warm expressions of approval from many of Mr. Winthrop's political friends, but it gave great offence to his opponents. Some idea of how they felt about it may be gathered from the following paragraph which I find in one of his scrap-books, and which he had evidently clipped from a Free-Soil newspaper:

"As Mr. Robert C. Winthrop's utterances on the subject of 'Fusion' are attracting some attention, we will state, for the benefit of the younger class of our political readers, that he

was formerly a Member of Congress, and was elected Speaker of the House. He was an excellent presiding officer and was also somewhat distinguished as a debater. He was lamentably deficient, however, in courage, and, having dodged behind one of the pillars of the Representative Chamber to escape the responsibility of a vote on the Wilmot Proviso, he became unpopular with the people of Massachusetts. He was accordingly turned out of the United States Senate, where he was filling or attempting to fill, a vacancy, and the next year he was badly beaten when running for Governor. By general consent he has since that time been kept out of political life. As President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, one of the principal managers of the Boston Public Library, and a speaker upon festive occasions, he still, however, occupies a creditable position, and is much esteemed by his fellow-citizens. His recent letter bears the unavoidable tinge of political disappointment, and the very reprehensible coloring of political hatred and revenge, elements of his character which we had hoped were exorcised by his long political exile."

Further extracts from Mr. Winthrop's private letters here follow : —

[Nahant, Aug. 23, 1855.] We buried poor Abbott Lawrence yesterday. His counsel would have been worth much in this exigency. The Fusion is in full progress, but I have refused to have any part or lot in it. Julius Rockwell has written me a long letter, to be shown to discreet friends, with much of which I agree, but it perhaps lays down a stiffer platform than I should care to be responsible for. Washington Hunt's published letter is a good thing, and expresses my sentiments better than any of the manifestoes of the day. I told Rockwell I thought the best thing a Whig convention could do would be to nominate him for Governor, but if there is an Abolitionist tail to his kite I shall bolt. My fear is, that instead of punishing the authors of the Nebraska outrage,

we are preparing the way for their renewed triumph. For myself, I would make any sacrifice but that of honest conviction to give a better direction to the public counsels. But what can be done by a man who feels as I do? I voted against the Fugitive Bill, but I can never go for defeating the execution of it by forcible resistance, or by unconstitutional legislation. I deplore the passage of the Nebraska Act, but I honestly believe that Northern rashness and violence have been the main instruments in accomplishing its worst results. I am for resisting the aggressions of slavery, but I cannot unite in taking the first great step for rending the Union by the formation of a sectional party.

[Sept. 4.] I am just from Cambridge, where I have been greatly gratified and interested. The induction of Professor Huntingdon was most impressive, and Dr. Walker's sermon admirable. It contained a quotation from my Alumni address, and I had hardly realized the nobleness of my own sentence until I heard it from his lips. There was a solemn earnestness about to-day's services which made one feel that souls were at stake and eternity the issue. It made me feel, too, that if any word I had spoken or written had suggested or sustained such a movement, it was worth all the other words of my life. I wish you had been there to catch the inspiration and to conceive new hopes of the College.

[Nov. 23.] Did you hear that I was unanimously nominated for Mayor of Boston by the 'Citizens' Union,' and that I unanimously declined? It would have been even more distasteful to me than the presidency of Harvard, for which some well-meaning friends continue to suggest my name. I am conscious that my life has become too much a frittering away of time in petty cares and laborious trifles, but I can at least avoid duties for which my tastes and temperament unfit me.[1]

[1] Mr. Winthrop had twice refused to be one of the Corporation of the University, but he had succeeded Mr. Everett as President of the Alumni Association, and was also President of the Harvard Club of Boston, a short-lived institution, now almost forgotten.

[June 7, 1856.] My long silence has been due to ill health and the sickness of two of my children. The latter are convalescent; but as I continued poorly, I decided to try the effect of a journey, and on Saturday, the 24th ult., was busy with my preparations when I was waylaid about noon by our worthy friend, Samuel May, with a request from the committee appointed at the Theodore Parker and Wendell Phillips meeting the night before that I would say a few words at Faneuil Hall that evening. I told him that nobody condemned the assault on Sumner more unqualifiedly than I did, but that the state of my health would render it impossible for me to accept, even if I desired to do so. At five in the afternoon appeared Judge Russell, accompanied by a gentleman whose name I did not catch. The Judge said he was not surprised I did not think it prudent to attend the meeting, if I supposed it were to be a continuation of that of the night before and under the same auspices, but that he wished to inform me the Governor was to preside, and that Walley, Hillard, and Chandler were to speak. I replied that no prudential considerations had entered into my answer to Mr. May, though I could not forget that Faneuil Hall meetings were not always the most fortunate things in times of excitement, — witness a somewhat recent one followed by an assault on the Court House and the murder of an officer; but I repeated my unmitigated condemnation of the attack on Sumner, and expressed a hope the present meeting would be so conducted that all good citizens might concur in its proceedings. About seven in the evening appeared Charles Hale, who earnestly suggested that it would be both graceful and politic for me to go to Faneuil Hall and express sympathy for Sumner. Again I went through my primary and conclusive reasons, but Charles being a friend, I ventured into some secondary and tertiary *strata*, pointing out that it would be impossible for me to say all that the existing irritation of the public mind required, — that I could not indorse Sumner's general course, or this particular speech of his, and that any qualifications at such a

moment would subject me to imputations of willingness to wound an injured man and feed an ancient grudge. I added, moreover, my regret that these meetings should have been hurried along with such precipitancy, while we have had only telegraphic accounts of what occurred, and while both Senate, House, and Criminal Courts are instituting processes to give us the facts. Monday I started with my family for Saratoga, returning here by way of New York a week later, when I found a note from Dr. S. G. Howe inviting me to a Kansas agitation meeting the next evening, and enclosing a note from Walley to suggest that I should make the opening speech. This I declined to do in an elaborate letter, which I have not yet seen in print. It was no great affair, rather solemn and grandiose, dealing more in cautions against violence than in appeals to clap-trap, and deprecating the prevailing tone of defiance and challenge. I wish I were in better health, and I wish and wish and wish I could see my way clear to saying something, or doing something, to satisfy my own conscience and soothe the outraged feelings of others. Monstrous enormities have undoubtedly been committed. In Kansas is realized the 'abomination of desolation standing where it ought not.' Pierce ought to have sent Scott there a month ago, to enforce peace at all hazards, — though his presence and prestige would have averted all hazards without a blow. It is a perfect farce that there should be a President at one end of Pennsylvania Avenue and a Congress at the other, and nothing done to prevent such an outrage as the destruction of Lawrence. But, bad as the beginning has been, I fear worse remains behind. How is civil war to be finally extinguished and any hope of free soil to be secured? This is a question for deeper wisdom than any which Emigrant Aid Societies, just and justifiable though they may be, have ever yet brought to it. Massachusetts men have either done too much or too little. I am not sure their efforts have as yet accomplished anything of substantial good. A quieter action would have answered a better purpose, but *Quietus* is not the

patron saint of these times, notwithstanding his bones have been brought over and enshrined on our soil. As to the attack on Sumner, I cannot exaggerate my sense of its atrocity. If I were in the House I should vote to expel his assailant forthwith, and censure his two comrades. But I am amazed that any moderate men should allow themselves to be drawn into a position which might seem to approve Sumner's speech. A more offensive, irritating, and unparliamentary philippic was never uttered in any legislative body; and it will be an evil day for the country if we shall so far yield to the impulses of a generous and honorable sympathy with the injured author as to hold up such a style of personal assault as a model for the imitation of our ingenuous youth. It is only less bad than the physical violence which it provoked.[1] Anti-slavery agitation has introduced a strain of vituperation and defamation into our discussions which is perfectly unendurable. Nor is it fair to charge the whole South with complicity in this outrage because a few newspapers and a few hot-heads have applauded it. The best Southern papers condemn it, and even Botts has come out nobly for expulsion. There are as many Christian gentlemen at the South as at the North, if we will only give them a fair chance to say what they think. I do not agree, either, that an attempt, however outrageous, to avenge what were considered by infuriated Hotspurs as insulting personalities, comes up to the full measure of the true idea of a sectional attack on freedom of speech.

[June 11.] The simultaneousness of the suggestion in my letter to Dr. Howe, and Crittenden's motion in the Senate, may furnish matter for the *quid nuncs*.[2] The truth is, I wrote confidentially to Crittenden, urging him *to do something*, and suggested this very thing. Under the circumstances, I am glad the printing of my letter was delayed, as I much prefer

[1] Mr. Seward told Mr. Winthrop (in Vienna, in 1859) that he had vainly entreated Mr. Sumner to soften certain passages, which the latter had read to him in advance.

[2] The plan for sending General Scott to Kansas with full powers.

Crittenden's movement should take all the credit, and have priority in the Southern estimation. It will thus stand a better chance of being regarded with favor. If any good comes of it (and I see that Seward has indorsed it) I shall be sufficiently rewarded by the result. Further explanations when we meet.

[July 6.] Our excellent friend, Ephraim Peabody, who, I fear, is not long for this world, met at St. Augustine an officer who had been much employed in Kansas until a very recent period, and who had enjoyed many personal opportunities of knowing what was going on there. From him Peabody formed a by no means favorable impression of Reeder and Robinson, which confirmed what I heard not long before from others. Peabody does not hesitate to pronounce the Republican movement to be, in his judgment, an organization of Disunion. This is farther than I am prepared to go myself, but I fully agreed with him when he spoke of Theodore Parker and Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner and the rest as having gradually educated our people to relish nothing but the 'eloquence of abuse.' As to the Whig Caucus, I went there for five minutes on my way to the Agricultural Trustees' dinner at C. G. Loring's in Beverly. My main object in going was to put a stop to a foolish story that I had come out for Buchanan. I declared myself uncommitted to any candidate, and disposed to pursue a policy of observation and expectation. Last week I sent a letter to Rives, in reply to one he had addressed to me in the 'National Intelligencer,' in which I sufficiently indicated my non-concurrence with some of his constitutional views.[1] Fillmore's speech at Albany was not entirely to my taste. He had better have left some things unsaid, though his general view of the danger of an

[1] William Cabell Rives, long Senator from Virginia, twice minister to France, and author of the Life of Madison, was a statesman whom Mr. Winthrop held in the highest esteem and with whom he occasionally corresponded upon public affairs. This particular letter to him will be found in the appendix to the second volume of Mr. Winthrop's works.

essentially sectional administration is a strong and startling one. Burlingame, however, seems to have denounced as traitors in advance all who hold back from the great Northern Raid. His reception seems to have almost equalled Webster's five years ago. It looks as if Brooks's bludgeon had given a sort of *coup de grâce* to the Whig party. Judge Arthur P. Butler has sent me a dozen copies of his speech, and I will send you one. *Audi alteram partem* is a safe rule, and though this speech does not change one's views of his nephew's conduct, it will give you a juster and more favorable impression of the uncle. A gentleman from Louisiana, who brought me a note the other day, told me that he had not met a single person at the South, in his own rank of life, who approved the assault on Sumner. Did I tell you that both Choate and Levi Lincoln, who do not always agree, cordially approved my letter to S. G. Howe?

[July 11.] I cannot go Buchanan and his platform. Personally, I could look with complacency upon the election of Fremont and Dayton, — the latter, you may remember, is one of my best friends, — but whether I can see my way clear to giving aid and comfort to the Republican party and taking my share of the responsibility of the results, is another matter. The resolutions of the Whigs of Maryland come nearer my way of thinking than anything I have met with lately, — bating, of course, some phrases.

[Aug. 17.] To-morrow's 'Courier' will contain a brief note of mine which pretty much settles my political position. With no candidate of our own, Whigs are compelled to choose between the three in the field. Choate has swallowed Buchanan, but I could not do it; while all my convictions are opposed to a sectional party under Fremont. Nothing remained but to support Fillmore, which, in my judgment, comes nearest to maintaining my old position, however little I may fancy the 'American' party so-called. It is a relief to me to have declared my preference, as every day was bringing me letters from North, South, East, or West, asking me to

declare for Fremont, to speak for Fillmore, or to join the Democracy. Choate's course threw suspicion on all Conservative men who were silent. Everett, Nathan and William Appleton, Hillard, and many others think as I do. I had a great treat here at Nahant last Sunday, in two sermons from Professor Park. He has no superior, and few equals, in the pulpit of any denomination.

[Aug. 30.] I hate to be pressed into political service just as I am giving the last touches to my Franklin Statue Oration. Certain gentlemen, however, insist upon my presiding at the Whig Convention, and I have not been able to get off. I shall try to be conciliatory and save pieces enough for a recomposition hereafter, but there is nothing harder than such an effort at such a moment. It is easy to speak on either extreme. Moderation is always dull. There is nothing impulsive or emotional about it. There was a moment in the early part of this hurly-burly when it would not have been difficult for me to go for Fremont. There was another moment when I even contemplated Buchanan. The pendulum oscillated two or three times and then settled down in the old perpendicular. I don't think it will swing again. But I am ready to make allowance for the vibrations and oscillations of other people while I am so conscious of my own. Nor am I insensible to the suggestion that what seems perpendicular to my own eye may after all strike others as very oblique. Tell Grinnell I duly received his Fremont song, and am sorry it does not suit my voice. If he will come and sing it to me, I might be converted at the eleventh hour. Meantime I think of sending him a 'Star-spangled Banner' just published by the 'Nationals.'

Mr. Winthrop's speech on taking the chair of the Whig State Convention (Sept. 3, 1856) is to be found in his second volume. As prefigured in the foregoing letter, it was moderate and conciliatory, — so much so that it was criticised in some quarters as lacking his

accustomed fire and partaking of the nature of an anodyne, — a description certainly not applicable to a campaign speech of his at Faneuil Hall on the 24th of October, when the fray had thickened. From this latter I quote a passage or two: —

I cannot help sometimes envying the orators of the Free-Soil party the facility and obviousness of their appeals, and coveting the fertility and availableness of their topics. I have even been tempted to flatter myself that I could be an orator, also, if I could find in my conscientious convictions of propriety or patriotism to employ the materials which they employ in the way in which they employ them, — to serve up the same sort of dishes with the same amount of *sauce*. We all know by heart the recipe for a regular Free-Soil speech in these days. One third part Missouri Compromise Repeal, without one grain of allowance for the indisputable fact that it was proposed and supported by Northern men, and could not have been carried without their aid; one third Kansas Outrages by Border Ruffians, without one scruple of doubt as to the wisdom of the Northern measures which, reasonably or unreasonably, have furnished so much of their pretext and provocation; and one third disjointed facts, and misapplied figures, and great swelling words of vanity, to prove that the South is, upon the whole, the very poorest, meanest, least productive, and most miserable part of creation, and therefore ought to be continually teased and taunted and reproached and reviled by everybody who feels himself to be better off. This, Mr. Chairman, is the brief prescription for a mixture, which, seasoned to the taste and administered foaming, is as certain to draw, and as sure to produce the desired inflammation, as a plaster of Burgundy pitch or Spanish flies is to raise a blister. The truth is, and it is a sad truth, that we are all becoming gradually educated to the language of abuse, — educated to listen to it, to relish it, and to employ it. The old phrases of soberness and truth, the old forms of argument

and appeal, have lost their power to attract or interest us. We must have racy and rancorous personalities, inflated representations and turgid exaggerations of individual or sectional wrongs, stinging and venomous invectives upon some person, or some measure, or some institution, — in order to gratify our perverted tastes and prurient appetites. These are the deplorable results of a style of address which, commencing not a great while ago, on a few anniversary platforms and in a few *quasi* pulpits, has gradually found its way into almost every public assembly, and has infected and poisoned the whole atmosphere of political discussion. I am glad that, on this point at least, I have not been wholly misrepresented of late, even by those from whom I most widely differ. Some of you may have seen a newspaper commentary on some recent remarks of mine, in which, after other and more caustic criticisms, my speech was pronounced to be about as good as a dose of chloroform. I thank the writer of that article, whoever he was. Chloroform, sir! Why, it is the very thing of all others which is most needed at this moment for the political peace and safety of our country. If a little of it could only have been administered before certain blows were struck, which we all deplore and condemn; if a little of it could have been administered before certain words were spoken, which some of us cannot applaud or approve; if a little of it could have been administered when rash and reckless men were first precipitating us into these perilous controversies by the breaking up of old compacts and by the earlier resistance to more recent laws; if a great deal of it could have been scattered broadcast over that unfortunate Territory of Kansas, before a blow had been struck or a rifle loaded on either side, — if chloroform could have been seasonably and successfully applied to such purposes as these, that mysterious anæsthetic agent would have established its character politically, as it has done already personally, as the most blessed anodyne which the pharmacy of the world has ever furnished. The preservation of the Union might thus have

been associated with another *Jackson* besides him of Tennessee, and the peace and honor of our own Commonwealth with another *Morton* besides him of Taunton.[1] It is now, indeed, too late for all this, and I fear we must say to Kansas at least, in the language, though by no means in the spirit, of Iago to the Moor of Venice, —

> 'Not poppy, nor mandragora,
> Not all the drowsy syrups of the world,
> Shall ever med'cine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou owedst yesterday.'

Yet even now, whatever is to be done for Kansas is, in my judgment, to be sooner done and better done by appeals to reason than by resort to rifles, — by the restoration of harmony and concord throughout the country than by any continuance of angry agitation or any political triumph whatever. At any rate, it cannot be denied that there is still room for the application of chloroform elsewhere. If a little of it could even now be inhaled in Carolina and in Massachusetts, — if a few drops could be sprinkled over a certain Southern township, called '96,' I think, or even over a few pulpits and professional chairs nearer home, — I am sure that the condition of the whole country would be all the better for it; and for the latter part of the process, I know of nobody who would hold the sponge more hopefully than our worthy friend, Dr. Luther V. Bell.[2] We have, indeed, fallen upon strange times. We hear one great political party indulging in frantic shouts that the institutions of the North — our free labor, our free speech, our free territory — are all in imminent danger of being overthrown or overrun; and we see masses of men among us rushing along in a wild, unreasoning frenzy to their rescue. We hear another great party vociferating with an even noisier clamor in other quarters that the institutions of the South are in immediate jeopardy, — their property, their slave labor,

[1] A controversy was then raging as to the relative share of Doctors Jackson and Morton in the introduction of anæsthetics.

[2] Dr. Bell was then the Whig candidate for Governor.

their equal rights to the enjoyment of common privileges and possessions, — and we see them banding themselves together to meet the assault with whatever of desperate energy a sense of impending wrong can stimulate. Take up a Southern paper, or listen to a Southern speech, and you would suppose that the whole history of this government, from its earliest organization, and a little before, had been one unbroken succession of injuries and oppressions committed by the North upon the South. Take up a Northern paper, or listen to a Northern speech, and you would imagine that there had been no glorious liberty enjoyed, no unrivalled prosperity experienced, no unexampled progress witnessed among us, but that year after year all the hopes and expectations and promises of our free institutions had been blasted and overwhelmed by the aggressions of a domineering and detestable Southern oligarchy. Exaggerated and ridiculously intensified, as I hold all such representations on both sides to be, I believe there is as much sincerity in the authors of them at one end of the Union as at the other; and I am not of that class, if any such there be, who hold them to be absolutely unfounded at either end. Without going into the details of the case, at present, on either side, I do not hesitate to express my belief that the success of the Democracy on the principles of the Cincinnati platform and the Ostend Circular would be dangerous to the rightful interests and claims of the free States; and that, on the other hand, the success of the Republican party — it might better be called the *semi-Republican* party, for its organization embraces only about half the Republic — would be dangerous to the legitimate power and rights of the Southern States. I rejoice, therefore, that there is a third party, which sees that out of these local and sectional dangers is made up one great national danger, — that the whole country is in danger from the success of either of them, and that the best safety of the Union is to be found in the defeat of them both. And most heartily do I wish that this third party could be seen rising

up, like an army with banners, in sufficient strength to come effectually between the two angry combatants, who are sacrificing the concord and unity of the nation to their intemperate violence, — just as some stout policeman, or some brave and philanthropic bystander, would thrust himself between two quarrelsome customers in the streets, interposing his stalwart form and brawny arm as a barrier to all further blows, and crying, *No, you don't*, to them both. Yes, that 's the word, — no, you don't, — to both of them. 'No, you don't disturb our domestic peace. No, you don't blot out the memory of common dangers and common glories which has so long bound us together as brethren. No, you don't break up that noble fabric of constitutional law and liberty, which is the best protection of all who enjoy it, and the best hope of all who, at home or abroad, are struggling in bondage. No, you don't dissolve the Union. Back, both of you, and get cool. No more broken compacts, no more personal assaults, no more challenges and duels, no more sectional strife. Hands off each other's throats. Back, both of you, and learn to govern yourselves before you presume to govern the country!' That is the spirit in which we are assembled here this evening. That is the spirit in which you and I and all of us, who still cling to the old Whig standard, have come here to ratify the nomination of Millard Fillmore. And that is the spirit in which we believe that he would enter upon his administration, and conduct it safely and prosperously to its close. We seek not to commit the reins of our Chariot of the Sun to any veteran Jehu whose vision may have grown oblique by gazing too intently on the Southern Cross; nor are we quite ready to intrust them to any youthful Phaeton who would incline too closely to the Northern Bear; but we would deliver them once more to that experienced and even-handed patriot, who has once guided the fiery coursers safely along the Ecliptic, holding them as steadily upon the track through the perilous passes of the Lion and the Scorpion as over the gentler elevations or declivities of the Virgin and

the Scales, and keeping successively in sight, and always and equally in mind, the whole one and thirty stars of our great American constellation!

. . . If yonder votive canvas could speak, if the lips of the Father of his Country could at this moment be unsealed, what other meaning could he give to his own memorable words of warning? Not a geographical party! Why, how long is it since it was distinctly declared by some of the present leaders of the Republican party that the great remedy for existing evils was the formation of a party which should have no Southern wing, — that was the phrase, *no Southern wing*, — for it was added that as long as there was a Southern wing, there must be compliances and concessions to the South, and compromises would be the order of the day. Away back in 1847, that was the object of a resolution in a Whig convention, which I had the honor to oppose, and which, I rejoice to say, was defeated. But the defeat, it seems, was not final, and the object has at length been accomplished. We have now a party without any Southern wing, and it is looked upon in some quarters as the opening of the first parallel of the great antislavery siege which has so long been projected. The result of such an organization remains still to be developed. But I am now where I always have been. I am against all such organizations. I have no faith in any party which tries to fly up into the high places of this great republic on one wing. As soon should I look to see the imperial bird which is the chosen emblem of our country's glory, cleaving the clouds and pursuing his fearless and upward path through the skies, if one of his wings had been ruthlessly lopped off. I want no maimed or mutilated emblem of my country's progress. I would not pluck a single plume from his pinions even to feather my own New England nest. And still less do I want any maimed or mutilated country. Nothing less than the whole, however bounded, — or, certainly, however it is now rightfully bounded, — will content me. And I desire to see no party organizations from which any portion of that

country is intentionally or necessarily excluded. When a party composed of only half the States in the Union shall assert its title to the name of a national party, and shall be claimed and recognized as such, it will not be long, I fear, — it will not be long, — before half the States will claim to be recognized as a nation by themselves. A semi-republican party is only the first step to a semi-republic, and we all know it is the first step that costs. . . . I am no panic-maker, nor have I ever set myself up to be much of a 'union-saver.' But this I do say, that this continued scuffling and wrangling between sections, these perpetual contentions and conflicts between the North and the South, are so shaking the foundations and jarring the superstructure and loosening the cement of our great republican fabric, that even if nobody should ever care to assail it directly, it may one day or other become absolutely untenantable, and be found falling to pieces by itself, by its own weakness and its own weight. And I do say, also, that every man who loves that Union — as others do, I doubt not, quite as sincerely and perhaps more wisely than myself — should look to it seasonably that by no word, act, or vote of his, which is not absolutely essential to the vindication of rights and privileges which are never to be abandoned, he hastens and precipitates a catastrophe which it may be too late to repent, and which no time or wisdom may be able to repair, and when a voice may be heard over our land, like that which once sounded over Jerusalem of old: 'If thou hadst known, even in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, — but now they are hid from thine eyes!'

IX.

[Oct. 2, 1856.] We got back from Berkshire in season to dine with John E. Thayer at Brookline, to meet the Merediths of Baltimore. We overtook the Presidential train at Springfield, and on my going to pay my respects, Pierce in-

sisted upon coming into our car to shake hands with Mrs Winthrop, and told me that if the Senate Bill had passed he had intended to name me one of the Commissioners to Kansas. It would have been a thankless task, but one difficult to refuse. I had a long talk with Hamilton Fish in New York, and met there, among others, an old school-mate of mine, George Goldthwaite, whom I had not seen since he left the Boston Latin School. He has been Chief Justice of Alabama, is a large slave-owner and a warm advocate of the peculiar institution. Frank Gray is, I fear, slowly nearing his end. If he could bequeath all his information to some one of equal capacity to digest, remember, and recall it at will, it would be a richer legacy than even his ample fortune. I have found his conversation more instructive than that of any man of my time.[1]

[Jan. 19, 1857.] We are said to have four feet of snow in our streets, and it is still snowing. Benton has been here, full of the necessity of preparing for the next General Election. What pluck the old fellow has at seventy-five! He and Granger dined with me, and some one mentioned that, since his re-election, Sumner had avowed a purpose to make a speech in the Senate, in comparison with which the one that cost him a beating will be as molasses and water to first-proof brandy. James A. Pearce must have prefigured this when he wrote me last month that, although he had five years left of his term, he doubted whether he could stand the Senate much longer, finding 'no adequate compensation in the bare and fruitless performance of duty.' He speaks of having been *with* the Democrats, rather than *of* them, in the late campaign, and this is undoubtedly the feeling of other Southern Whigs similarly situated. I sent you my talk at the gathering of Sons of Connecticut — no great things. I have half promised our old Handel and Haydn Society to deliver an address on Music in New England at a festival they are arranging for

[1] Hon. Francis C. Gray, for some account of whom see the fifth volume of the second series of this Society's Proceedings.

the early spring. I should rather like to do this, as really good music has been and is the greatest pleasure of my life.

On the 17th of June, 1857, a celebration took place on Bunker Hill, under the auspices of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, when Edward Everett delivered an address at the unveiling of a statue of Joseph Warren. Besides bidding to this commemoration distinguished persons from all parts of the country, the Committee of Arrangements saw fit to extend a wholesale invitation to the entire Senate of the United States, and they were made not a little uncomfortable by finding that, among the very few acceptances, was one from James M. Mason of Virginia, who, as the author of the Fugitive Slave Bill, was more unpopular in New England than any other Southern statesman. Having unexpectedly caught this Tartar, the committee proceeded to request Mr. Winthrop, as a vice-president of the Association, and an old acquaintance of Mr. Mason, to show him some little attention, and formally introduce him to the guests at the banquet which followed the literary exercises; in doing which, after paying a brief compliment to Virginia, Mr. Winthrop used the following language: —

> The State to which I refer, and which was once entitled by the people of Boston assembled in Faneuil Hall 'our noble, patriotic sister-colony, Virginia,' is represented here to-day by one of her distinguished Senators in Congress, — a gentleman whom I have known personally in a sphere of common duty, — whose name is associated, in more than one generation, with eminent service in his native State and in the national councils, and whom I take pleasure in welcoming here, in

your behalf, on this, his first visit to New England. I present to you, fellow-citizens, the Honorable James Murray Mason, a Senator of the United States from the Old Dominion.

Less than three weeks afterward occurred the annual celebration of the Fourth of July by the Municipality of Boston, when the appointed orator of the day took occasion to stigmatize Mr. Winthrop's course in the above matter as an exhibition of "complimentary flunkyism." Thereupon ensued one of those acrimonious controversies as indigenous to this neighborhood as its east wind, — the City government declining to print the oration, and the friends of its author writing excited letters to the newspapers,[1] claiming that he had only administered "another deserved rebuke" to Mr. Winthrop, who preferred to take no public notice of what had occurred, but who incidentally alluded to it in the following private letter: —

[July 21.] We had a good time at the Alumni Festival, but as presiding officer I had to propose so many toasts and make so many speeches that I was quite exhausted. Napier[2] was charming, and I took him down to dine with Prescott. As to the Mason matter, I had nothing to do with the invitations, and did not know he was coming until two days before the celebration. He is no favorite of mine, and I once had a brush with him in the Senate; but he was here as our invited guest, and it seemed only reasonable to forget political differences and treat him as the representative of Virginia, as one who had been acting Vice-President of the United States and

[1] The "Antislavery Standard," among others, had a letter from William Jay, proclaiming that, while "Boston has no monopoly of flunkyism, she has contrived to give it a depth and an intensity rarely surpassed by the most ingenious servility."

[2] The tenth Lord Napier of Merchistoun, then British Minister to the United States, who made an effective speech at the Alumni dinner.

is still Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Wilson and Burlingame both told me, on the spot, that they were glad he was there, and as they both complimented me on the way in which I introduced him, they could have had nothing to do with this attack. I have never, to my knowledge, seen my assailant, who, I am told, is not only a minister of the Gospel, but a man of cultivation. I have prompted no action with regard to him, but I cannot consider his course calculated to give a favorable impression of New England hospitality. During my public life I have certainly experienced a variety of epithets. 'Doughface' and 'trimmer' were long ago familiar. 'Codfish aristocrat' is what Andrew Johnson amused himself by calling me on the floor of the House. Irate Webster men, I believe, were known to whisper 'Judas,' and Sumner, as you may remember, once intimated that I was little better than an assassin! But 'flunky' is new, and it has an ignoble sound; but I do not mind it so much as the mean charge, now just made, that I modified my language about Mason when I gave it to the printer. You know how careful I am about my *ipsissima verba*.

[Sept. 21.] How could so wise a man as our friend B. R. Curtis do so deplorable a thing as to resign from the U. S. Supreme Court at this untimely moment? I may overestimate the importance of his course, and I certainly esteem and respect him, but I have never known a resignation which has so much the air of desertion. Buchanan will have a chance to make the Court still less acceptable to this part of the country. As to local politics, Banks and Gardner are beating the air *per alios et per se*, trying which can say the hardest things of each other. There is no Whig ticket, and I can at least rejoice at being under no obligation to attend conventions or mount stumps. I think Banks will be chosen, but I need hardly say I do not intend to vote for him. I may do him an injustice, but he strikes me as partaking a good deal of the solemn, pretentious humbug. They call him the 'little iron man,' but I should say there was much *lead* and a considerable

alloy of *brass* in his composition.[1] You may remember that in my remarks at the Alumni dinner, I warmly advocated the erection of a hall for anniversary festivals and other appropriate occasions, with some such inscription as 'The Alumni of Harvard to their Alma Mater.' It has greatly gratified me to receive a cordial letter from Charles Sanders, offering $5,000 for this purpose, and I have some reason to think he may give more hereafter.[2]

Having been strongly urged to declare himself in the State canvass, Mr. Winthrop wrote a letter, dated Oct. 16, 1857, and addressed to Col. J. W. Sever, in which he recited his reasons for again declining to vote for the candidate of a sectional party, and adding: —

I am disposed to vote for that one of the other candidates who stands the best chance of defeating the Republican ticket. The friends with whom I have heretofore acted seem to entertain the fullest confidence that Governor Gardner is that man; and unless I see some stronger reason for distrusting their judgment than I do now, I shall give him a vote this year for the first time. If I cannot approve every act of his administration thus far, I think it is at least safer 'to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of.'

I find in his scrap-book a leading article from the "National Intelligencer" praising his course, and the following extract from a Boston letter in the New York "Times": —

"Mr. Winthrop's letter to the Gardner meeting will add as little to the Governor's strength as to the writer's reputation. It is plain to see that Mr. Winthrop hates Governor Gardner

[1] This is one of those off-hand characterizations common to the familiar letters of intimate friends, but which are generally to be taken *cum grano salis*. Mr. Winthrop formed a more complimentary opinion of General Banks when he knew him better.

[2] By his will, Mr. Sanders left $50,000 to this object.

only one degree less than he hates Mr. Banks, and that personal malignity is his motive of action. He is ready to do anything, or to vote for any person, that will aid him most to pay an ancient grudge. He carries into the political arena the same intense spitefulness that Shylock took into court. Everybody sees this, and none more clearly than the men whom Mr. Winthrop thinks he is aiding, but whom in reality he injures. It is not to be supposed that they will hold themselves under any very special obligations to him, let the election go as it may."

On the 8th of October, 1857, Mr. Winthrop submitted to the City Council a memorial prepared by him on behalf of the Boston Provident Association, in which he earnestly recommended bringing together under a common roof the offices of the principal authorities and associations connected with the charities of Boston, in order to afford not merely a central headquarters for investigation and relief, but a temporary home for shelter, and to facilitate a more active and systematic division of duty and labor. This appeal, persistently renewed at intervals by Mr. Winthrop and others, ultimately led to the erection of the well-known Charity Bureau in Chardon Street, one of the most useful of our public buildings; but it was not until twelve years later that he had the gratification of making an opening address within its walls. Of his various public utterances during the year 1858, the most important was one on the completion and dedication of the Public Library, of which more than two years before he had officiated on laying the corner-stone.

[Feb. 8, 1858.] Thanks for your letter from Naples. The climate of Italy has been wafted over to us latterly, and

even her beggary we have seen something of. In my Provident Association we relieved more than two thousand poor families in the single month of January. Prescott has had a shock, premonitory of what may still be postponed some years. We cannot afford to lose his sunny face and genial welcome. His brother-in-law, Franklin Dexter (a very old friend of mine), died last autumn. Everett is going his Washington circuit again, gathering laurels for himself and money for Mount Vernon. They have had a horrid knock-down and drag-out affair in Congress *apropos* of Kansas. I shut my eyes and ears to politics, sick of the very sound of brawling and bickering about slavery, but the failing health of my wife's mother renders going abroad, for the present, out of the question.

[June 19.] Greenough's statue of Governor Winthrop at Mount Auburn is perhaps a little too youthful and saint-like in its general effect, but on the whole a successful work. I sat for the hands, at his request. We had three days of drenching rain in Philadelphia, and as many pleasant ones in New York, where James Lenox showed me his books and pictures, and Peter Cooper his Institute. I was glad to escape 'Anniversary Week.' So much of abolition and sectional fanaticism has got mixed up with the meetings of our religious and charitable associations that I cannot abide them, though in old times I used not a little to value such opportunities of saying a good word. We are going to Nahant for the rest of the summer, and I shall attend no celebrations, political or otherwise, in spite of what the newspapers say. To my great astonishment, President Quincy asked me whether I did not intend to allow myself to run for Congress again this autumn. I replied that I had had too many years of that bondage to be disposed to put on the yoke again. I can imagine nothing I should dislike more. Yes, one thing, — the Presidency of Harvard. I have been not a little annoyed at a revival of the old story that I was seriously talked of for that post. Some one has sent me a Sandwich 'Advocate'

with a whole column of my qualifications. A newspaper proposal to run me for Vice-President with Crittenden two years hence is more congenial, in the abstract. There is no Whig leader left for whom I have more regard than for him, or whom I would do more to help, — but he is seventy-one years old, none too strong, and, in spite of what Washington Hunt writes, I see no hope of the White House for him. President Quincy, I should have added, also surprised me by the moderation of his tone, said he did not differ from me so much as I might think, and that he was no approver of the course of certain persons, whom he characterized as monomaniacs, but whose names I do not mention, as he expressed a wish not to be quoted.

[Oct. 22.] How are you going to vote? Some of our local Whigs have been meeting at Parker's and getting up a little manifesto, proposing a resuscitation of a National Whig party and an independent stand at the coming State election. The address was sent to me to sign, but I wrote Hillard that, while I should probably vote as advised, I a little preferred to be one of the addressed and not one of the addressers. Personally, I have my doubts. I suppose there is no question whatever that either Banks or Beach will be Governor, and I had rather vote for Beach than be either directly or indirectly responsible for the continued supremacy of Banks & Co. Nor shall I hesitate to support John T. Heard in preference to Burlingame.

When his intention to vote for the Democratic candidate for Congress became known, he was urged to preside at a public meeting of the latter's supporters, without distinction of party. This he declined to do; but he addressed to the managing committee a letter from which the following is an extract: —

I had desired and designed to keep myself aloof from politics during the present campaign. But observing a willing-

ness in some quarters to draw my position into doubt, owing to the absence of my name from the signatures to the recent Whig address, I cannot hesitate to avow the intention which I long ago formed in regard to the particular subject of your meeting. I have an unchangeable conviction that intemperate antislavery agitation has been a source of a very large part of the troubles by which our country has been disturbed and harassed for some years past; that it has done nothing to advance any real interest of freedom, but has provoked and stimulated not a few of the very measures against which it was ostensibly aimed; that it has impeded and obstructed all other measures for the prosperity and welfare of the people; and that there is little hope of any useful or practical legislation being successfully attempted until Congress shall cease to be a mere ring for the prize-fights of proslavery and antislavery agitators. It is for the highest interest of the whole country that there should be an end of this sectional strife, and I know not how this result can be more effectively promoted than by granting at least a temporary furlough to those of the combatants who, by disposition, or principle, or antecedent circumstances or connections, are most strongly inclined to prolong and aggravate that strife. This consideration alone is sufficient to determine my choice between the only two candidates for Congress in my District, and it is hardly necessary for me to add that my vote will be given for Colonel Heard.

On the night of the State election (November 2), when the returns sufficiently indicated a Republican victory, Henry Wilson made a triumphant speech on the steps of the Parker House, in which he referred to the above letter as follows: —

"We have been told by Mr. Winthrop that he wanted to put the antislavery agitators, among them Mr. Burlingame, on the retired list. He wanted to give him a furlough. The

people of this district have not given Mr. Burlingame a furlough; but the people of Massachusetts have given Mr. Robert C. Winthrop a perpetual discharge! (*Loud cheering.*) Gentlemen, we have ever been liberal and generous. We have invited to our ranks men from every party. We have given them all the honors we could bestow. Over and over again we have tendered to Mr. Winthrop our support. We have offered to put in his hands our banner: he has scornfully turned aside. He now proposes to give a furlough to the agitators, as he chooses to call the men who have resisted every demand of the slave power, before which he quailed, and for his conduct in regard to which the people of this State have sent him into perpetual retirement."

To this Mr. Winthrop made no public rejoinder, but he alluded to it in a private letter thus: —

[Nov. 6.] I did not vote the whole Democratic ticket, and I am not much readier than you are to indorse the entire policy of Buchanan and his party. Indeed, I could not go the length of the Whig address, which declared a sweeping purpose to defeat every Republican candidate whatsoever, whether moderate or radical. As to Wilson's anathemas, they are inconsistent, to say the least. If I 'quailed,' as he says, 'before the slave power,' surely I was an improper person to be intrusted with his 'banner.' Aside from this, it is a figure of speech to say I refused 'scornfully.' I considered, and still consider, his offer to have been a flattering one. Had I been a soldier of fortune, I should have closed with it and claimed my pay; but, while never a Conscience-Whig, I have always been troubled with a conscience, and this, Kennedy says, is the worst complaint from which a politician can suffer. I have sometimes smiled to think what wry faces would have been visible in some quarters had I appeared booted and spurred in the Republican camp, wielding a *bâton* of command. I should have received a warm welcome from some old friends, but I could never have satisfied the ultras.

I was born a Conservative; and if I may venture to compare myself to my betters, I have in me something of the Hampden and the Falkland, but not a particle of the Cromwell. I received from anonymous sources several savage newspaper attacks upon my letter, but two leaders in the New York 'Tribune,' though a little ribald, were very funny, and were doubtless written by Congdon, who has a knack at such things, though he will never do anything so good as that scathing article on Sumner which first gave him celebrity. Bob writes me from Europe that he accidentally stumbled on an old New York 'Herald,' in which my School Festival speech of last summer (a modest little milk-and-watery affair, as I thought) was a good deal derided. I can forgive the 'Herald' this, because it has done good service in showing up Seward's late utterances at Rome and Rochester. They are the most significant things of the day, and should be pondered by all who are halting between two opinions.

By way of giving both sides, I here insert the greater part of the "Tribune" articles just mentioned: —

"Winthrop's Last Word.

"Amateur patriotism is, abstractly considered, one of the most fascinating and classical of virtues. But in this country amateur patriotism is at a discount. . . . That the people of the Northern States — educated, thoughtful, intelligent, honest, and religious — are all wrong, and that Mr. Robert C. Winthrop, of Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, is all right, is one of those phenomena, whether regarded as intellectual, moral, or political, which fill the mind with awe. . . . Our readers may remember a gentleman of the name of Robert C. Winthrop, — a gentleman who lives in a very genteel square in a very genteel locality in the very genteel city of Boston. Quite *up*, you must know; miles away from vulgar people; in a very good house; with a very good library; and good pictures; and two

cloaks; and other comfortable things. That this gentleman upon the eve of an election should shuffle himself from his genteel shelf, and write a refined letter in defence of genteel politics, is not half so wonderful as that he should write the letter aforesaid to Col. Isaac H. Wright, a Mexican colonel of a Massachusetts regiment, and therefore not, *ex officio*, a genteel personage. But Mr. Winthrop has done it, — bless his honest and self-sacrificing soul! Was this a moment for etiquette? A glorious Union endangered, — the proud fabric of our political liberties shaking as with a shaking palsy, — was this a moment in which to hesitate? Not a bit of it. Mr. Winthrop jumped out of bed, where he has been for the last five years. Mr. Winthrop put on his dressing-gown; Mr. Winthrop grasped his best pen; and Mr. Winthrop wrote to Colonel Wright, — Colonel Wright of the Mexican army! And what did Mr. Winthrop write? Listen to his words: 'I have an unchangeable conviction that intemperate antislavery agitation has been the source of a very large part of the troubles by which our country has been disturbed and harassed for some time past!' What troubles, O Robert? Financial, religious, or political, O my Winthrop? When a man has an 'unchangeable conviction,' it should be about something. Take off your nightcap, *O mio Roberto!* and let us reason together. When you came into public life, reverend sir, antislavery principles were in fashion. You were the *decus* and sixpenny *tutamen* of your Whig party. Of antislavery opinions you were wont to utter a few, not many, but enough. Think, if you are right now, how wrong you must have been then! Yours was of course 'temperate' agitation; but did it not pave and smooth and level the way for the 'intemperate'? You were never very warm; but you were never, as you are now, happily, sweetly, safely, and delightfully refrigerant. We will not look too closely into the details of the past. You bolted when you thought it best to bolt, just as you stuck by Freedom and Massachusetts opinion when you thought it best to

stick by them. Are you moved, my Robert? Try, then, to be what you once were. Try to be worthy of that great historical wealth of ancestry which is yours. You cut but a sorry figure when you are writing to such folk as Mr. Isaac H. Wright, colonel and auctioneer, represents. You make us think of the Frenchman in the basket, midway between heaven and earth, as described in a novel called 'Pelham.' You will never have a good digestion and a sound liver until you make up your mind. Do so, O Robert, and write to *us* a letter!"

"The Result in Massachusetts.

"The returns from Massachusetts are exceedingly refreshing. The Republicans carry everything. Banks is re-elected Governor by over 30,000. Amos A. Lawrence, the 'American' candidate, is left so dismally out in the cold that he will one day be obliged to procure affidavits that he was ever a candidate at all. There is little necessity for recapitulating the details. Rather be it our pleasing task to wipe the tears from the eyes of the mourners, to pour oil into their wounds, and to bid them, as citizens, as Christians, as patriots, to beware of suicide. The party-colored combination of Venerable Whigs, of Democrats not at all venerable, of all the sick and the sour, the halt and the blind, of the fretful, the fussy, and the nervous, is in a most distressing condition. Here has been a desperate effort to rescue Massachusetts from the Philistines. Money has been spent. But why should we talk of filthy lucre? Talent, intellectual vigor, classical knowledge, sublime self-sacrifice, and the Boston 'Courier,' have all been thrown away. It has been proved over and over again, to the satisfaction of everybody except about seventy thousand voters, that unless Massachusetts gives up her nonsensical philanthropy, her expensive honesty, her ridiculous love of right, and her stupendously foolish hatred of wrong, the dome of the State House would fall in, crushing the statue of Washington by Chantrey, and the stuffed cod-

fish in Representatives Hall by an unknown artist, burying a considerable portion of Beacon Street under the ruins, and filling up forever the Frog Pond on the Common. To avert this dire catastrophe, Mr. Robert C. Winthrop wrote the celebrated and vigorous epistle to which we have already given immortality. To avert this, Mr. Rufus Choate, by particular desire of his party, by a resolute, praiseworthy, and almost incomprehensible effort, refrained from making any speeches during the campaign. To avert this, sundry solid citizens unbuttoned their pockets, took out their pocket-books, and planked their money without a groan. Ben Hallett — to give a single instance of the astonishing *pot-pourri* — figured for one night only upon the same platform with Prof. Benjamin Peirce of the august University of Harvard, who saw on Sunday more stars than he ever saw before; Isaac H. Wright, the Mexican brave; and Charles Theodore Russell, whose middle name affords the only indication that he is the gift of God!

"Alas, that we should be compelled to record the failure of so much gallantry, self-sacrifice, letter-writing, and speech-making! That lavender-scented aristocrats should get into bed with malodorous loafers; that nice nobility, with unplugged nostrils, should meander in mud and perambulate the dangerous districts to the utter ruin of its varnished boots; that Demosthenes, Hyperides, Cicero, Pitt, and Canning (these eminent men still live in Boston, although popularly supposed by the rest of the world to be dead) should pour forth floods of eloquence; that George Lunt, the modern Junius, should write some hundreds of columns awful to look upon, and still more awful to read, — and all in vain! We are going to ruin, and no mistake! We see the 'demnition bow-wows' in the distance. We see the vortex, the maelstrom, the eddies, the quicksands, the rocks, the breakers. 'Man the lifeboat!' should be upon every white and trembling lip in Boston and the demesnes adjacent. For Church is nodding to State, and State is returning the

compliment. Respectability has retired for the purpose of committing *felo de se.* The Boston 'Courier' alone stands firm.

'We a little longer wait;
But how little none can know!'

"It may be uncivil, and even brutal, for us to indulge in the language of exultation. But our opinion being that Massachusetts Hunkerism is nine-tenths dead, we beg pardon of the fraction still living while we say that the Massachusetts Republicans have done nobly. They have not merely conquered, but they have conquered wisely. The returns show that they are not merely powerful numerically, but that they are fast becoming powerful morally. The Dark Lantern candle has ceased to smoulder, — it has even ceased to smell; for which we, even at this distance of three hundred miles, are sufficiently grateful."

On the 7th of April, 1859, Mr. Winthrop delivered before the Young Men's Christian Association of Boston a long and elaborate address entitled "Christianity, neither Sectarian nor Sectional, the Great Remedy for Social and Political Evils;" and on the 13th of May, in the Boston Music Hall, a lecture on "Luxury and the Fine Arts," in aid of the fund for Ball's equestrian statue of Washington.[1]

[April 11.] I labored hard over what you call my first sermon; and if I ever tried to do good in my life, it was in that effort. I am conscious of having made a deep impression, and of having exerted a greater amount of immediate power upon my audience than perhaps ever before. Hillard, Felton,

[1] The former of these two addresses was also delivered in Richmond, Virginia, the latter in Baltimore; but he declined invitations to repeat them in other parts of the country because he found that the repetition of his own productions palled upon him. "It is difficult [he wrote] to get up the requisite *vim* a second time. I envy Everett his unrivalled faculty in this respect."

Joel Parker, Dr. Frothingham, and Chandler Robbins were among the most earnest and cordial of my congratulators, while Dr. Blagden and my own assistant rector, Cotton Smith, applauded to the echo. So you see I could not have been very illiberal, or very loose, in my theology. Some one has sent me two different numbers of the New York 'Journal of Commerce' containing very glowing compliments from a writer who appears to have been present. I have more than once had misgivings that I mistook my vocation. My brother William (much my senior and the flower of our family) of his own accord studied for the ministry, and it was a grief to my mother that he did not live to be ordained. In her last illness (I was then a Sophomore) she expressed a hope that, after graduating, I would follow his example, if the way seemed clear before me, which it did not. I was ambitious then, with a temperament ill suited to a round of parish duties; but I have since felt that in the pulpit I might gradually have become an influence for good beside which all other successes of my life would have been paltry. At all events, I should not have preached politics or transcendentalism.

[May 12.] My fiftieth anniversary! I had three delightful days with Kennedy in Baltimore, three more with Rives at Castle Hill, and my addresses in Richmond and Baltimore were delivered to full and appreciative houses. Our long-deferred trip to Europe is now practically settled, and we expect to sail next month. Before going, I shall resign my vice-presidency of the Tract Society here. I wrote Seth Bliss more than a year ago that antislavery essays did not rightfully enter into our province, and would be fatal to the unity and usefulness of the Society. I now feel even more strongly on this subject, and believe that such publications only inflame the Southern mind, and retard the very reforms they are intended to promote. They undoubtedly contain a great deal of abstract truth; but one cannot expect the Southern people to consider abstract truths when they are continually made the subject of outrageous tirades in North-

ern newspapers. I have always held that the great problem of American slavery should be approached in a serious and solemn spirit, not in violence and vituperation. It is no answer to say that Southern newspapers are often equally vituperative. They are a hot-blooded race, and their property is at stake. I wonder how we should feel if *our* property was at stake, here in New England. If civil war comes, we shall lose many brave men in the field, but our homes are too far away to be reached by the enemy, and our mills will undoubtedly make money by army contracts. I abhor the prospect of great fortunes so acquired.

Mr. Winthrop's second visit to Europe lasted about fifteen months; and though at times clouded by news of family bereavements and by serious illnesses of members of his party, yet he greatly enjoyed the opportunities afforded him of meeting old friends, of making new ones, and of visiting famous countries he had never seen. Among other interesting experiences, he had a private audience of Pius IX. in the Vatican, and a pleasant hour with Cavour in the Foreign Office in Turin, on both which occasions those eminent Italians discussed public affairs with a good deal of freedom. At Vienna, in the autumn of 1859, he stumbled upon Senator Seward, fresh from the Holy Land, and together they had a private audience of the Emperor Francis Joseph, and longer interviews with leading Austrian statesmen. Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Seward were not extravagant admirers of each other's political course, but their personal relations had always been amicable, and they now had many long talks upon the state of things at home, when Mr. Seward's cheerful optimism was exhibited in marked contrast to Mr. Winthrop's pervading dread of civil war. The latter shared the

prevailing impression that Seward would receive the Republican nomination for the Presidency in the following summer, and he thought him fairly entitled to it, though he subsequently made up his mind that Abraham Lincoln was the abler man of the two and the more adroit political manager. Before his return home, Mr. Winthrop received from President Buchanan a commission to represent the United States at the Statistical Congress in London, but his engagements on the Continent prevented him from accepting it.

[Boston, Oct. 1, 1860.] I got home not feeling very well, with a thousand matters to attend to and no relish for speech-making, but I made a point of making public adhesion to the National Union nominations, and my remarks seem to have been appreciated by our friends. The great game of Sumner, Wilson, and Co. is to show up John Bell's record and make him out an ultra proslavery man. I spiked one of their guns by pointing out that if he voted against the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, so did Abraham Lincoln. I am told there has been published at the South a Breckinridge pamphlet proving both Bell and Everett to be downright Free-Soilers. Try, if you can, to procure for me a copy of it, and I will file it with a Charleston 'Mercury' I received in Europe, which spurned the idea of there being any real Conservatism at the North, and singled *me* out as an 'Abolitionist in disguise,' — a charge which carried me back to the contest for the Speakership. This time it was probably in answer to a droll suggestion in a Texas paper that I should run for Vice-President with Sam Houston. If Lincoln be chosen, which seems not unlikely, you and I must do what we can to prevent mischief, but I fear there will be more than we or anybody else can manage. I believe him to be at heart a moderate man; and if Southern Senators and Representatives would only keep their tempers, things might not go along as

badly as they fear. The danger is that, in the first flush of such an election, madness will rule the hour.

The speech alluded to in the foregoing letter was made by Mr. Winthrop in the Boston Music Hall, Sept. 25, 1860. In it, after paying a warm tribute to John Bell and Edward Everett, he spoke of Mr. Lincoln with kindness and appreciation. I quote a single passage on another subject: —

I shall not soon forget the emotions with which I received at Vienna, last November, the first tidings of that atrocious affair at Harper's Ferry. They came in the form of a brief telegraphic despatch, without details, without explanations, simply announcing that an armed and organized band of abolition conspirators had taken forcible possession of a National Arsenal, in furtherance of a concerted insurrection of the blacks, and that blood had already begun to flow. I think there could have been no true American heart in Europe at that moment that did not throb and thrill with horror at that announcement. But I confess to have experienced emotions hardly less deep or distressing, when I read, not long afterwards, an account of a meeting — in this very hall, I believe — at which the gallows at Charlestown, in Virginia, was likened to the Cross of Calvary, and at which it was openly declared that the ringleader of that desperate and wicked conspiracy was right. Sir, if it had been suggested to me then that before another year had passed away, the presiding officer of that meeting would have been deliberately nominated by the Republican party of Massachusetts for the Chief Magistracy of the Commonwealth, I should have repelled the idea as not within the prospect of belief, — as utterly transcending any pitch of extravagance which even the wildest and most ultra members of that party had ever prepared us to anticipate. But the nomination is before us. The candidate, I am told, is a most amiable and respectable gentleman, and

I have no wish to say an unkind word of him or of those who indorse him. But I should be false to every impulse of my heart, if being here at all this evening, if opening my lips at all during this campaign, I did not enter my humble protest, — as one to whom the cause of Christianity and of social order is dear, as one who would see the Word of God and the laws of the land respected and obeyed, — if I did not enter my earnest protest against such an attempt to give the seeming sanction of the people of Massachusetts to sentiments so impious and so abominable.

The echoes of this momentous general election had hardly subsided before Mr. Winthrop again found himself under the impending shadow of a great domestic sorrow. His wife had experienced in Europe a troublesome affection of the eye, but she now began to develop disquieting symptoms of an internal malady which in the following spring proved fatal. Her health, however, declined slowly, and he endeavored to distract his thoughts by anxious consideration of the critical condition of the country. His hurried diary mentions repeated consultations in Mr. Everett's library, where were sometimes present such men as Nathan and William Appleton, Joseph Grinnell, John H. Clifford, Peleg Sprague, Jacob Bigelow, George Ticknor, and Benjamin R. Curtis, — correspondence with Crittenden, Rives, and other friends in Border States, or with moderate men of different parties in other parts of the country, — all in the hope of devising some scheme for the peaceful preservation of the Union. On the 23d of January, 1861, Mr. Everett and he started for Washington, heading the delegation in charge of the great Boston petition for a Compromise, signed by nearly 15,000 legal voters, a petition forcibly,

if irreverently, described by Mr. Sumner as "mere wind, — nothing better than a penny-whistle in a tempest." I find among Mr. Winthrop's papers memoranda of conversations he then had at the capital with public men of all shades of opinion — among them President Buchanan, ex-President Tyler, Vice-President Breckinridge, Generals Scott and Cass, Mr. Justice McLean, Senators Pearce, Seward, Douglas, Mason, Hunter, Wilson and Slidell, together with many members of the House, including Charles Francis Adams, with whose moderate statesmanlike course, as he considered it, at this juncture, Mr. Winthrop was greatly pleased, and all the more so because he had differed very widely from him in the past.[1]

Seward, too, showed, he thought, a conciliatory spirit, but, on the whole, he returned to Boston greatly disheartened, feeling that the extreme men of both sections were bent on precipitating disunion and likely to have their way. In a published letter of the 19th of February excusing himself from accepting an invitation to speak at a great Union meeting at Troy, N. Y., he wrote:

> The newly elected President is passing through your city while I write, on his way to the national capital. He must be more or less than man if he does not feel deeply the weight of responsibility which rests upon him. Let him not fail to be assured that from us who have voted against him, as from those who have voted for him, he may confidently rely on a

[1] I find among his papers a newspaper report of a speech of Mr. Blaine's in Cincinnati long afterward, in which Mr. Adams is charged with having been guilty of both cowardice and treason in the winter of 1861, and with having excited in the mind of Abraham Lincoln a "thrill of horror." To this Mr. Winthrop has added, "I do not believe such an assertion would have been ventured had Lincoln been still living."

generous sympathy and support in every just and reasonable measure which he may adopt, to maintain the Constitution of the country. If we can do little to strengthen the arm of authority at a moment like this, let us be careful to do nothing to weaken it by any poor partisan opposition. Let us hope that he will adopt a policy which will enable us to rally around him without reserve, in upholding the government over which he has been called to preside. Let us hope that he will take counsel of moderate and forbearing men, — of men of more than one idea; of men who will prefer a united country to a united party; of men who had rather be found inconsistent with themselves than inconsistent with the safety of the Republic.

Early in March his wife's condition became more critical, and after prolonged suffering, borne with unfailing patience and thought for others, she died on the 26th of April, 1861, shortly after the surrender of Fort Sumter. Like so many other men, in early life he had occasionally tried his hand at verse, and though he soon became convinced that nature had not intended him for a poet, yet now and then in leisure hours — more particularly in hours of sorrow — his thoughts would sometimes find expression in a hymn, a sonnet, or a metrical translation. He had never been sufficiently satisfied with any one of these effusions to allow it to go into print, but towards the close of this summer, having written a patriotic hymn for the National Fast, it occurred to him to send it anonymously to a newspaper and see what became of it. He was agreeably surprised to find it reproduced in different parts of the country with words of commendation, and as it has never been included in his works, I here insert it: —

HYMN FOR THE NATIONAL FAST.

SEPTEMBER 26, 1861.

With humbled hearts, great God, this day,
Before Thy throne we sorrowing stand;
Oh, hear our prayer, forgive our sins,
And turn Thy judgments from our land.

Our fathers placed their trust in Thee,
And Thou didst lead them like a flock;
Through Thee they stemmed the wintry waves,
Through Thee they braved the battle's shock.

Be to the sons once more, O God,
As to their sires Thou wert so long;
Revive our faith, rebuke our fears,
And let us in Thy might be strong.

The clouds which thicken o'er our path,
'T is Thine alone to chase away;
Oh, show the brightness of Thy face,
And turn our darkness into day!

Pour forth Thy Spirit, gracious Lord,
To help us in this hour of need;
Appease the rage which rends our land,
And bid its wounds no longer bleed.

In vain we burnish sword or shield,
Without a blessing from on high;
If radiant with no smile from Thee,
In vain our banners sweep the sky.

Give counsel to our chosen chiefs,
Give courage to our marshall'd bands;
Let prayer and faith and trust in God
Inflame their hearts and nerve their hands!

In no resentment let them strike;
No hatred stain their holy cause;
But consecrated be each arm
To Union, Freedom, and the Laws!

And, oh, in Thine own time, restore
Good-will and peace from sea to sea;
And in each brother's breast revive
The love that springs from love to Thee!

So may our land, from danger freed,
With one consent Thy mercy own;
And every knee and heart be bent
In grateful homage at Thy throne.

'Not unto us, not unto us,' —
In joyful chorus then we 'll sing, —
'But all the glory, all the praise,
Be unto Thee, our God and King!'

It was a favorite idea of his that the real purpose of such services is often misconceived, and in one of the commonplace books in which he sometimes jotted down opinions of men and things, I find the following reflections: —

Not a few of the clergy appear to mistake the character and object of a National Fast. Their sermons often seem to indicate that such a day had been appointed in order to enable them to open the flood-gates of pulpit politics, — that they might discuss the condition of public affairs and give us the benefit of their counsel. Nothing could be farther, in my judgment, from the true design and use of these occasions. If an earthquake had laid a city (like Lisbon) in ruins, and a fast had been proclaimed, it would not be the province of the clergy to give discourses on the history and origin of earthquakes. If the cholera, or some new cohort (*nova cohors*, Hor.) of fevers were sweeping over the land, and a day of humiliation and prayer were proclaimed, the clergy would not be called on to give us a diagnosis of the disease, or to discuss the different modes of treating it. And so, to my mind, it seems greatly out of place for the pulpit to be employed on such a day in treating of the nature and causes of our politi-

cal troubles. The one great idea should be a nation on its knees, acknowledging its own sins, confessing the impotence of all human wisdom for such an emergency, and imploring the Divine aid. We boasted of our independence so long that we almost began to imagine ourselves independent of God. Such a day should inculcate the doctrine of subordination to Divine Government and dependence on Divine protection. There is a worse sort of secession than that from any human authority or any earthly union, and there has been too much evidence in our recent national career that a presumptuous self-reliance was usurping the place of that old trust in God which characterized the founders of our Republic.

The Civil War which Mr. Winthrop had foreboded was now in full blast, and his position with regard to it was briefly this. Although he had always scouted the doctrines of secession, he was a believer in that abstract right of Revolution so succinctly set forth by Abraham Lincoln in his celebrated speech in the House of Representatives, Jan. 12, 1848: —

"Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. . . . Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people that can, may revolutionize and make their own of so much of the territory as they inhabit. More than this, a majority of any portion of such people may revolutionize, putting down a minority mingled with or near about them, who may oppose their movements."

In conformity to this general view, Mr. Winthrop considered the Southern people fully entitled to try to achieve their independence if they saw fit; but he believed them profoundly mistaken in thinking that such

a step, even if successful, would be for their advantage; while, if unsuccessful, it legitimately involved, in his opinion, not merely loss of life, but confiscation of property and condign punishment. He was equally clear that it was the bounden duty of President Lincoln to vindicate the authority of the general government, and alike the duty and the interest of the Northern people to support him energetically in maintaining the Constitution and the laws. For any attempt, however, direct or indirect, to convert a war for the Constitution and the Union into an Emancipation Crusade, he had no feeling but that of reprobation. On the 8th of October, at the desire of Senator Wilson, and at the particular request of some of the latter's friends who had procured a standard for his regiment (the Twenty-Second Massachusetts), Mr. Winthrop presented this standard to that regiment on Boston Common, and made a patriotic speech entitled "The Flag of the Union," part of which was long familiar to schoolboys.[1] At its close, Senator Sumner, who was among his audience, came forward and offered his hand, which Mr. Winthrop took, and so ended a memorable feud of more than sixteen years' duration.[2] Not long afterward he received a letter from Secretary Seward asking him to

[1] The Providence "Journal" printed this speech with the heading, "Dawn of the Millennium: Robert C. Winthrop presents a standard to Henry Wilson!"

[2] If Mr. Winthrop did not always find it easy to forget, he liked to forgive and be forgiven. He had previously "made up" with Andrew Johnson and Robert Toombs, who, in the mean time, had conceived a furious dislike of each other. Of the three (Sumner, Johnson, and Toombs), the one most congenial to him socially, in spite of all that had passed, was the last-named, whose reported boast that he would one day call the roll of his slaves on Bunker Hill is one of those legends fabricated in the *ante-bellum* period in order "to fire the Northern heart."

come to Washington on public business, which he forthwith did, and found that a scheme was on foot for sending abroad, at the expense of the government, a few gentlemen whose names were well known, in order that they might mingle with leading men in London and Paris, and counteract, if possible, the influence of Southern emissaries, who were known to be very active. Five gentlemen, including Mr. Winthrop, were originally offered these positions, the others being Mr. Everett, Mr. John P. Kennedy, Archbishop Hughes of New York, and Bishop McIlvaine of Ohio. Upon this subject Mr. Winthrop had several conversations with Mr. Seward and a long one with President Lincoln; and though he expressed an entire willingness to go if the latter really wished him to do so, yet his inclination was decidedly against it, partly owing to his recent domestic affliction, partly from a feeling that the quasi-official position of such agents might not be wholly agreeable to our accredited ministers to England and France. In this latter view both Mr. Everett and Mr. Kennedy concurred; and as, just at this time, Mr. Seward received more encouraging news from Europe, the project was temporarily withdrawn, though, in the following month, Archbishop Hughes and Bishop McIlvaine went out.[1] Mr. Winthrop has left notes, taken at the time, of this trip to Washington, with memoranda of conversations with General Scott, General Robert Anderson, Attorney-General Bates, Mr. Secretary Chase, Mr. Jus-

[1] In the first volume of the second series of the Proceedings of this Society (pp. 202–210) will be found a longer account of the matter, communicated by Mr. Winthrop in 1884, in consequence of certain inaccuracies in the Autobiography of Thurlow Weed published after the latter's death.

tice Wayne, Lord Lyons, and others. In a conversation with President Lincoln upon another subject, the latter read to him a confidential letter he had just finished, vindicating the course he had pursued with reference to General Fremont's abolition proclamation; and when Mr. Winthrop expressed his cordial approbation of its tone, Mr. Lincoln remarked dryly, "There is a good deal of old Whig left in me yet."

[Dec. 3, 1861.] I never wake up in the morning nowadays without asking what I can do for my country, but I rarely get a satisfactory answer. . . . When you see the President tell him the only satisfaction I have had for a month past has been in reading his calm, plain, and excellent message, full of wisdom and moderation, and a welcome rebuke to the extravagance of some of his friends. How Petigru looms up above the standard of common heroes! I had a noble letter from him before the mails were cut off. Mason and Slidell have only themselves to thank for their imprisonment, but I wish I felt as well satisfied that the arrest of Morehead and Faulkner was for equally good reasons. I tried to see them at Fort Warren, but could not get permission.[1] William Appleton has had a letter from Faulkner which makes us feel that his case is a hard one, and I have since heard that both his daughter and Mrs. Morehead are seriously ill. Meantime a most miserable clamor has been raised because I and others sent down some wine to old friends, and interested ourselves in providing the common prisoners with overcoats. One malignant sheet calls us sympathizers with rebellion, and threatens to send our names to the Secretary of State! Pray let Seward understand what a malicious spirit of defamation and misrepresentation prevails

[1] Charles S. Morehead, ex-Governor of Kentucky, who had served with the writer in Congress, and Charles J. Faulkner of Virginia, ex-Minister to France.

in this quarter. Language is often used which suggests rather the ferocity of a tribe of Apache Indians than the sentiments of an educated and self-respecting community. I am glad you like my memoir of Nathan Appleton. It was his own desire that I should write it, and it beguiled many gloomy hours.

For the next three years Mr. Winthrop was a good deal of an invalid. He had never been a robust man, and his fresh complexion gave the impression of better health than he often enjoyed. Latterly, the strain upon him of his wife's long illness and death, the comparative loneliness which had succeeded it, his distress at the condition of the country, too sedentary a mode of life, and too much brain-work, had all combined to subject him to attacks of insomnia, which gradually became persistent, and which were sometimes attended by no inconsiderable amount of physical debility and mental depression. Medical advice, with frequent change of air and scene, worked only a partial relief; but his condition was never such as to confine him to the house, and by an effort of will he continued to take an active part in the management of the numerous institutions with which he was connected, occasionally speaking in public, and even undertaking some new duties, among them service as Chairman of the Relief Committee of the Massachusetts Soldiers' Fund. At a public meeting in the Merchants' Exchange, in February, 1862, he paid a tribute to William Appleton, and one to President Felton in the following month, at a meeting of this Society. At the anniversary of the American Tract Society, May 27, 1862, he made a speech entitled "Tracts for the Soldiers," which attained

the distinction, or the infamy (according to one's point of view), of being stigmatized by an Antislavery Convention as "quasi-treasonable." I have room but for a single paragraph: —

> If there be 'a devil in secession,' as a fearless Tennessee patriot has recently told us, we all know what is the only power which has ever succeeded in casting out devils. It was not the power of Beelzebub; nor was it the power of man. No military stratagems, no civil statesmanship, no policy of man's device, no wholesale confiscations or emancipations, can reach it. It came of old, and it must come again, from higher than human sources or influences. We must look, in God's good time, for a spirit of reconciliation, breathed forth from the very throne of the Most High, to turn back our hearts to each other and to Himself; and we must invite it, and invoke it, and prepare the way for it, by all the instrumentalities in our power.

His remarks on the following day, at the anniversary of the Massachusetts Colonization Society, were equally distasteful in some quarters: —

> I am [said he] no advocate of any wholesale projects of emancipation, — whether under the color of confiscation, or upon any pretence of the imaginary necessities of martial law. . . . President Lincoln, whose wisdom, moderation, and patriotism we all concur in acknowledging and admiring, — whether as exhibited in the measures he has taken to overcome the assaults of his enemies, or to overrule the mad and monstrous projects of some of his friends, — has urgently and repeatedly insisted, as we all remember, that a well-devised scheme of colonization is one of the great necessities of the present hour. I believe that, in so doing, he has expressed the opinion of nine-tenths of the people of the United States out of New England.

On the 22d of August, 1862, he spoke at short notice on Boston Common at a mass meeting in aid of recruiting.[1] Among other things, he said: —

It is vain to review the past; we cannot recall it. It is vain to speculate on the future; we cannot penetrate its hidden depths. It is vain, and worse than vain, to criticise and cavil about the present. We must have confidence in somebody. We must not only trust in God, but we must trust in the government which is over us, and in the generals whom that government has commissioned. . . . The stern and solemn fact is before us that three-quarters of a million of loyal men have been found inadequate to overcome the wanton and wicked rebellion which has lifted its parricidal hands against the nation. The stern and solemn fact is before us that although so many glorious successes have been accomplished, and so many deeds of heroic daring performed, our gallant army has recently encountered a series of checks and reverses which have once more put almost everything in peril. The stern and startling fact is before us and upon us, that the President has been constrained to call for twice 300,000 more men to rescue us from defeat, and to give us a hope of finishing successfully the herculean labor of restoring the national authority. Who can hesitate for a moment what answer shall be given to this call?

. . . But let us remember that we are not engaged in a war of the North against the South, but a war of the nation against those who have risen up to destroy it. Let us keep our eyes and our hearts steadily fixed upon the old flag of our fathers, — the same to-day as when it was first lifted in triumph at Saratoga, or first struck down in madness at Sumter. That flag tells our whole story. We must do whatever we do, and whatever is necessary to be done, with the paramount

[1] There were several platforms on the Common on this occasion, — Governor Andrew speaking at No. 1, Mr. Everett at No. 2, Mr. Winthrop at No. 3.

purpose of preserving it, untorn and untarnished, in all its radiance and in all its just significance. We must be true to every tint of its red, white, and blue. Behold it at this moment streaming from every window and watch-tower and cupola of our fair city! It has a star for every State. Let us resolve that there shall still be a State for every star!

On the 9th of September he made another recruiting speech, this time in Faneuil Hall, having previously made one at Lenox, in Berkshire, where he had happened to be staying; and on the 5th of November he made, by request, on Boston Common, a speech on the presentation of a flag to the Forty-Third Massachusetts, or "Tiger" regiment. In the preceding month (October, 1862) he had served in New York as a delegate to the Triennial Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, where he had taken a very active part in debate, and where it was largely due to his influence and exertions that the Resolutions on the Condition of the Church as affected by the State of the Country were so worded as to pave the way for a complete reunion at the close of the Civil War. In 1863 he was much less well; but among his public utterances during that year were a speech in celebration of the birthday of Washington, a tribute to Crittenden, one of the political and personal friends he most admired and respected, and an address entitled "Concordia," at the Triennial Festival of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association.[1]

[1] In January, 1861, President Quincy, Mr. Savage, Mr. Sparks, and Mr. Winthrop, meeting at the Harvard Observatory as members of the Visiting Committee, were informed that *Mars* was very near the earth, and that, owing to an error in the Ephemeris, *Concordia* could not be found; whereupon Mr. Winthrop suggested that the ancients would have been ready to ascribe our national troubles to these planetary influences;

In the same year he retired from the Presidency of the Alumni of Harvard, after eight years' service, in which connection it is not inappropriate to quote a characteristic compliment paid him by Oliver Wendell Holmes, who presided at the Alumni Festival of 1860 owing to Mr. Winthrop's absence in Europe.

"Your President [said Dr. Holmes] so graces every assembly which he visits, by his presence, his dignity, his suavity, his art of ruling, — whether it be the council of a nation, the legislature of a State, or the lively democracy of a dinner-table, — that, when he enters a meeting like this, it seems as if the chairs stood back of their own will to let him pass to the head of the board, and the table itself, that most intelligent of quadrupeds, the half-reasoning mahogany, tipped him a spontaneous welcome to its highest seat, and of itself rapped the assembly to order."

I conclude this chapter with a few extracts from his private letters and diaries in 1862 and 1863: —

[Feb. 1, 1862.] We have somehow or other lost the good-will of the world. We cannot do without it, and must make some sacrifices to recover it. A recognition of belligerency at an early moment is an offence, — but it is one *we* have often given to others, and is not in itself cause for war. In my judgment, the best way to avert recognition is by kind words abroad and strong blows at home. If it comes, let us treat it with a silent shrug, remembering how often we ourselves have patronized rebellions. You will be glad to know that Lord St. Germans wrote me that he had shown my letter to Lords Palmerston and Russell, and to the Duke of Newcastle.

and finding on two subsequent visits to the Observatory that *Concordia* was still missing, he pleasantly alluded to the subject on this occasion, and named the speech accordingly.

[Aug. 21, 1862.] I saw much of Washington Hunt at Niagara, and we ran down to Buffalo and dined sociably with Fillmore. At Saratoga I met Governor Morgan, Mr. Justice Wayne, Granger, and others; while at West Point I had some long talks with Scott and Crittenden. The former said, ten days ago, that with the additional men called for by the President we ought to take Richmond and finish the war triumphantly. God grant this; but it does not look like it for the moment.

[Nov. 8, 1862.] I have no tears to shed over the result in New York, though I do not sing '*O mio Fernando.*' The ultras have received a seasonable check. They were driving the engine over the precipice, and the people have put on the brakes. Seward will hardly wear mourning for this overturn, and Lincoln, if he is wise, will turn it to good account. My platform is, — Constitutionalism in Council, Vigor in action. I do not believe that blacks or whites are to be benefited by sudden and sweeping Acts of Emancipation.

[Washington, April 25, 1863.] Saw the President at the White House. He mentioned, among other things, that his anxieties of mind had not affected his health, and that he weighed 180 pounds. Sat some little time with Seward at the State Department. Found him, as usual, full of hope.

[Saratoga Springs, July 24, 1863.] I had some private talk on the hotel verandah with three public men who might not wish to be quoted. One said that the country is coming out stronger and richer than ever, — that half our debt (great as it is) is absorbed in currency, and that everything is prosperous in spite of the war. Another said that everything is going wrong, and that nothing but a change of administration will bring matters right. The third had come to the comfortable conclusion that the contest will be brought to an end at no distant day, leaving things but little changed from their old *status*, aside from the loss of lives and treasure. I met with three equally different pictures of the war in my journey hither. In the train near Rutland were eight or ten private

soldiers returning after the expiration of their term of service, evidently glad to get back, and full of stories of their experiences and of the death of comrades. They were succeeded near Castleton by as many more, freshly drafted, and on their way to the *rendezvous*, — intelligent, athletic young fellows, whose merriment seemed forced, and over whose countenances sad looks kept stealing. At another station was a group of women, young and old, all in tears at parting with another batch of recruits. Such scenes affect me deeply.

[Sharon Springs, July 31, 1863.] Judge Edwards Pierrepont called and described a recent interview he had with Seward, who (he said) is now greatly alarmed at our condition and fears trouble with foreign nations. This is a not unwholesome state of mind for Seward to be in, but I suspect it may be partly feigned to influence others. Pierrepont also described in detail a visit paid by him to the President on the Sunday before the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation. He found Lincoln lying on a sofa, in a sort of yellow linen dressing-gown and embroidered slippers. After some conversation, he suddenly inquired of Judge P. what he thought of the Emancipation scheme, and then jumped up, gesticulating vehemently, and exclaimed, 'It is my last card, and I will play it and may win the trick.' Pierrepont said James Wadsworth was present on this occasion.

[Newport, Aug. 31, 1863.] By the doctor's orders I mingle in the gay throng, dine out three or four times a week, and look in at *matinées* and *soirées;* but while I am none the worse for it, I greatly doubt if I am any better, and my nights continue wretched. What I have most enjoyed lately has been reading the last volume of Washington Irving's Life. I found some letters in it from him to me, and one of them, which I had nearly forgotten, is quite a gem. Pierre Irving, however, is a little mistaken in his dates. I knew his uncle as early as 1840. Mercier, the French Minister, tells me he is opposed to any prolonged occupation of Mexico.

X.

In 1861, by a family arrangement, Mr. Winthrop came into possession of a mass of letters and State papers, chiefly of the colonial period, which, together with those previously inherited by him from his father, constituted the largest collection of its kind in New England, and proved unexpectedly rich in new material of much historical value. Everything which did not immediately relate to Governor John Winthrop the elder, he placed at the disposal of this Society, in order that selections might be gradually printed for the use of students, and he actively co-operated in editing the first three volumes of such selections, besides separately communicating to our Proceedings many manuscripts of special interest.[1] It had long been his desire to write a Life of John Winthrop, toward which he had already made considerable preparation, and the discovery of this new matter enabled him to issue the first volume at the close of 1863. The task was a congenial one, but it entailed prodigious labor, as of all the puzzling handwritings of early colonial times that of Governor Winthrop is perhaps hardest to decipher, while the difficulty of supplying missing names and dates was very great. Resisting the temptation to furnish what is technically known as a "popular" Life of his subject,

[1] Up to the present time the Society has printed six separate volumes of selections from Mr. Winthrop's "Winthrop Papers," and one volume of selections from his "Bowdoin and Temple Papers." The equivalent of at least one other volume is to be found scattered through our Collections and Proceedings; but much still remains to be done, as the mine is far from being exhausted.

— an undertaking he preferred to leave to others, — his object was not merely to supply an exhaustive work of reference, but so to arrange the letters and journals, the confessions and experiences, of one who has been so often styled the founder and father of New England, that the story of his career should be substantially told in his own words.

I do not forget [wrote Mr. Winthrop in his introduction] the caution suggested in the old couplet of the author of the 'Night Thoughts,' —

> 'They that on glorious ancestors enlarge
> Produce their debt, instead of their discharge.'

I hardly know, however, of a deeper debt which any one can incur, or of a more binding obligation which any one can discharge, — whenever circumstances may afford the means and opportunity of doing so, — than to bring out from the treasures of the past, and to hold up to the view of the present and coming generations, a great example of private virtue and public usefulness; of moderation in counsel and energy in action; of stern self-denial and unsparing self-devotion; of childlike trust in God, and implicit faith in the gospel of Christ, united with courage enough for conducting a colony across the ocean, and wisdom enough for building up a State in the wilderness. Nor could any one easily subject himself to a juster reproach than that of shrinking from the discharge of such a debt, for fear of being thought inclined to exaggerate the importance, or to magnify the merits of a remote ancestry.[1]

[1] In days when the flame of party animosity blazed high in Massachusetts, and before the two men had become good friends, our lamented associate, Judge Rockwood Hoar, has been known more than once to intimate that Mr. Winthrop was not unaddicted to an occasional habit of blowing a trumpet in honor of his great ancestor, at meetings of this Society or elsewhere. I am not prepared to affirm that there was never any foundation for such a charge, but the thing was done, if done at all, unconsciously and in good faith. The truth is that the Governor was precisely

More than two centuries have now passed away since the elder Winthrop was laid in his narrow tomb. Six generations of descendants have intervened between him and myself. At such a distance of time, I trust my sincerity will not be questioned when I say, with another and older poet, —

> 'Et genus et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
> Vix ea nostra voco.'

The uncertain state of his health decided him to publish the first volume by itself, without waiting to finish the second, which appeared two years later. The reception of both by the press, and by that portion of the reading public interested in early New England history, was eminently gratifying, and not the less so because some of the longest and most appreciative notices of the book were written by total strangers to him, one, in particular, in "Blackwood's Magazine" for August, 1867.[1]

[April 30, 1864.] I sent you my *Shaksperiana*, hastily got up for the Annual Meeting of our Historical Society. It has a fact or two of which, though I ventured to tell my *confrères* 'we do not forget,' I have no idea that any of them knew before I told them. The disasters of the spring campaign thus far are depressing. Congress, too, exhibits lamentable indecency and rowdyism. Lincoln's letter to the Kentucky men is among his best efforts. Why is he not willing to let

the sort of public character Mr. Winthrop would have warmly admired, even if he had been in no way related to him; for he was not only all that he is described to have been, in the above paragraph, but he had, like his descendant, a marked distaste for rampant and windy enthusiasts of both sexes, coupled with a firm persuasion that, in a community, "the best part is always the least, and of that best part the wiser is always the lesser."

[1] Among other reviews of it, those which appeared in the "North American Review" for January, 1864, and January, 1867; the "Atlantic Monthly" for January, 1864; the "Christian Examiner" for March, 1864; and the "Princeton Review" for April, 1864, are worthy of mention.

Grant employ McClellan? It would do much to reinstate public confidence. By the way, I met McDowell at dinner here some little time ago, and was agreeably surprised to find him one of the most modest, intelligent, and agreeable officers whose acquaintance I had made during the war. I was a guest last week at a banquet of the Saturday Club, where I sat between Longfellow and Holmes. Agassiz presided, and called me out after Emerson and Richard Grant White. I spoke some ten minutes. So did Governor Andrew, Freeman Clarke, and others, while Holmes read a spirited poem. But the occasion was more in your line than mine; the older I grow the less I care for such things, though they are sometimes unavoidable.

In the course of a short address, entitled More Tracts for the Camp, delivered at the anniversary of the American Tract Society in Boston, May 24, 1864, he took occasion to say: —

Never, certainly, was there greater need than now of earnest and united efforts, among Christians of all sections and of all sects, to stay the flood of vice and crime, of immorality and irreligion, which is sweeping so wildly over our land. I would not exaggerate the pernicious effects of this deplorable civil war upon public and private morality. Doubtless there have been developments of courage and patriotism, of benevolence and munificence, of self-denial and self-sacrifice, among the men and among the women of our land, during the last two or three years, which are worthy of all admiration, and which furnish no small set-off to the balance of evil on the other side of the account. But no one can be unconscious of the fearful influences of times like the present, in enfeebling and almost extinguishing that sense of individual responsibility, moral and religious, which is the great safeguard of social virtue. No one can be blind to the reckless extravagance, the dishonest contracts, the gambling speculations, the cor-

rupting luxury, the intemperance, profligacy, and crime, which have followed with still accelerating steps in the train of the terrible struggle with which we are engaged. No one can fail to perceive the danger that a real or even a professed patriotism may be made the cover for a multitude of sins, and gallantry on the field of battle be regarded as a substitute for all the duties of the decalogue. . . . The camps of our armies are among the choicest fields for labors like those in which this Society is engaged. There is a yearning and a craving, we are told by our agents, for the word of life, among those to whom the prospect of death is so immediately present as it is to soldiers on the perilous edge of battle. There is a hunger and thirst after tidings of a better world among those who feel how soon they may be summoned away from this world. And woe to us all, if we fail to meet the full demand for these moral and religious supplies! Woe to our country, if it fails to cherish and sustain this and other kindred societies which make up together the great Christian Commissariat of the War!

[Sept. 1, 1864.] I am pleased to know you liked my tribute to President Quincy, with which I took some pains. Since then I have passed a pleasant week at Newport with Holmes for fellow-boarder. Your wife would not let you live in the house a day with him if she were to hear him talk about religion; but my creed is proof against his rationalistic theories. Meantime his patriotism and loyalty are up to fever heat, while I content myself with keeping true to the good old Constitutional range between '76 and '89. I greatly fear that you and I are going to differ about the Presidential question, and that it is too late for you to talk me over. It really seems to me as if the best hope of restoring the Union was in a change of administration, and I feel irresistibly compelled to support McClellan, though the advertisement of my name as intending to speak at the meeting in New York last month was without my knowledge or consent. I shall not improbably have something to say later, if my health admits.

[Sept. 10.] The news from Atlanta ought to have made us all young again. Sherman is a grand fellow. All his strategy is of the highest order, and his letter about our Massachusetts recruiting system a choice utterance. We shall have him in the White House one of these days, but it is too late now. I admit that the Chicago platform does not suit my fancy, and that George Pendleton is hardly my *beau idéal* for Vice-President; but, on the whole, I do not see my way clear to prefer Lincoln and Johnson to McClellan and Pendleton. The former's letter of acceptance is admirable, and I can say Amen to it.

Mr. Winthrop's acquaintance with General McClellan had been only of a few years' duration; but during that time he had formed a very high opinion of him, the result both of personal intercourse and correspondence upon public affairs, considering him a brave, prudent, thoroughly patriotic man, a stranger to political management and political intrigue, but possessing a degree of personal magnetism invaluable alike to a great commander and to a Presidential candidate. He recognized, however, that President Lincoln was the abler and shrewder man of the two, and one whose natural leanings were quite as conservative; but it seemed to him that the latter had been led by political exigencies and party trammels into an objectionable policy, which had perverted the original object of the war and threatened to prolong its duration. He had opposed the latter's original candidacy because he feared that his election would be the signal for one of the bloodiest struggles of modern times, and in this the event proved him right. He now opposed the latter's second candidacy because he believed that another President and a different policy would bring that struggle to an earlier termination, and

in this the event proved him wrong. Like many other loyal public men of the North, some of them personal friends with whom he had consulted, he was under the impression that the Southern Confederacy had it in their power to protract hostilities for several years. Could he have foreseen that this Confederacy would collapse within nine months, or had the Chicago Convention seen fit to nominate an out-and-out Democrat, he might have felt differently. As matters stood, and after the most careful consideration he could reach, his course seemed clear, and he had no hesitation in declaring himself. On the 17th of September, 1864, he was one of the prominent speakers at the great open-air meeting in New York to ratify McClellan's nomination, — the largest political gathering he had ever attended, and stated to have been the largest ever assembled, up to that time, in this country. The state of his health obliged him to decline many similar invitations, but a month later (Oct. 18, 1864) he made a long and elaborate speech, intended for circulation as a campaign document, at a great open-air meeting at New London, choosing this locality because it was one with which he had family associations, and because Connecticut was considered one of the doubtful States. On the 2d of November, too, he made a shorter speech in the Boston Music Hall, at a so-called campfire of the McClellan Legion. These three speeches together cover no less than fifty pages of close type, and, though they necessarily include a certain amount of repetition, they cannot be fully described in a memoir like this, but I quote from them at some length in order to clearly define his position and exhibit the general tone of his argument: —

The candidate whom we support is eminently a young man's candidate, — the youngest in years, I believe, that was ever nominated for the Presidency; but who has won laurels in the field, and shown a discretion and a wisdom in civil affairs which would have done honor to the oldest. It might well be the pride of the young men of America not only to see that he has fair play and a generous support, but to secure him an opportunity of showing what young men can do, and are destined to do, in the high places of the land, as well as on the field of battle. The question before us, however, is not about candidates, but about our country; not about the relative claims or merits of Abraham Lincoln and George B. McClellan, but about the nation's welfare and the nation's life. In whose hands will that precious life be safest? That is the question; and I do not forget that it is a question of opinion, on which every man has a right to form, and every man has a right to follow, his own opinion. Nothing could be further from my purpose than to cast the slightest imputation upon the patriotism of Abraham Lincoln, or anybody else. Those who are of opinion that he is just about to succeed in bringing the war to a successful termination are right to give him their support. We would all support him if we were of this opinion, for we want the country saved, no matter who is to have the glory. I can only say that in my humble judgment, the policy of his administration, as gradually developed, has been a policy calculated to divide and weaken the counsels of the North, and to unite and concentrate the energies of the South, — a policy in which the all-important end of re-establishing the Union is now almost shut out of sight, so mixed up and complicated has it been with schemes of philanthropy on the one side, and with schemes of confiscation, subjugation, and extermination on the other. Instead of the one great constitutional idea of *restoration*, we have been treated to all manner of projects and theories of *reconstruction*. At one time we have had solemn propositions for annihilating whole States, whole systems of States, and blotting out their stars from

our national banner. At another we have heard open declarations that we were never again to be permitted to have 'the Constitution as it is, and the Union as it was.' Good heavens, what else are we fighting for? What other Union are we striving to establish? What other Constitution are our rulers and legislators solemnly sworn to support? . . .

We all know that it was the success of the Republican party, with its sectional organization and its alleged sectional objects, which furnished the original occasion, four years ago, for that ungodly and atrocious assault upon our Government which inaugurated this gigantic civil war. We all know that the secession leaders of the South, who had so long been meditating the movement in vain, exulted in the election of Abraham Lincoln at that day, — as I fully believe they will exult again, if he is rechosen in November, — because it supplied the very fuel which was needed for this awful conflagration. That assault upon the Government can never be characterized in terms of too severe condemnation; and if railing at the rebellion or its authors would do any good this evening, — if it would be anything better than baying at yonder moon, — I would join with you in denouncing it until the vocabulary of condemnation was exhausted. But we all know that the whole North rose nobly up, as one man, without distinction of party, to repel that assault; and that they have sustained the Government — Democrats, Republicans, and Conservatives alike — with all their hearts and hands, pouring out their blood and money like water from that day to this. And the loyal States will continue to sustain the 'powers that be' in all their constitutional action until the end of their term, whatever may be the result of the pending election. But no considerations of loyalty or patriotism call upon us to unite in prolonging the supremacy of a party whose art and part it has so eminently been to extinguish almost every spark of Union sentiment in Southern breasts, and to implant in them a spirit of desperation and hatred which has rendered the victories of our armies

harder to achieve, and has robbed them of so many of their legitimate results after they have been achieved. . . . We need a change of counsels. We need a change of counsellors. We need to go back to the principles embodied in the resolution adopted by Congress, not far from the fourth day of July, 1861, and worthy to have been adopted on that hallowed anniversary itself, — adopted in the Senate on the motion of Andrew Johnson, and in the House on the motion of the lamented Crittenden. That resolution embodied the simple policy of a vigorous prosecution of the war for no purpose of subjugation or aggression, in no spirit of revenge or hatred, with no disposition to destroy or impair the constitutional rights of any State or section, but for the sole end of vindicating the Constitution and re-establishing the Union. Such a policy has been enforced and illustrated by General McClellan in his memorable despatch from Harrison's Landing, in his brilliant oration at West Point, and in his admirable letter accepting the nomination, which alone constitutes a platform broad enough and comprehensive enough for every patriot in the land to stand upon. It has the clarion ring to rally a nation to the rescue. It speaks, too, in trumpet tones to our deluded brethren in rebellion, warning them that there is to be no cessation of hostilities upon any other basis than that of Union, but proclaiming to them that the door of reconciliation and peace is open on their resuming their allegiance to the Constitution and the laws. That letter of acceptance has turned the flank of his revilers, and has taken away every pretext for those indecent and unjust insinuations against opponents of the Administration, which have fallen from so many ruthless partisan pens, and from so many reckless partisan tongues. The air is full of them. Arbitrary and arrogant assumptions of superior patriotism and loyalty; coarse and malicious misrepresentations and imputations; opprobrious and insulting names and epithets, — they come swarming up from stump and rostrum and press and platform. We meet them at every turn. Let us not retort them or resent them.

Let us imitate the example of our candidate, whose quiet endurance of injustice and calumny has been one of the most beautiful illustrations of his character. Let us pass on, unawed and unintimidated, to the declaration of our own honest opinions, and to the assertion and exercise of our rights as freemen. With such an issue as national life or national death before us, there ought to be no hesitation. Every one of us, young and old, is called upon by considerations from which there can be no appeal, by obligations from which there can be no escape, to form a careful, dispassionate, conscientious opinion as to his own individual duty, and then to perform that duty without flinching or faltering. We may be pardoned for an honest mistake. We may be excused for an error of judgment. But we can never be excused, before men or before God, for standing neutral and doing nothing. . . .

I was greatly struck by an account of an interview which certain very earnest antislavery gentlemen held with the President, not a great while ago, on the subject of substituting General Fremont for my old friend Edward Stanly as Provisional Governor of North Carolina. President Lincoln is represented to have replied, 'Gentlemen, it is generally the case that a man who begins a work is not the best man to carry it on to a successful termination. I believe it was so in the case of Moses, was it not? He got the children of Israel out of Egypt, but the Lord selected some one else to bring them to their journey's end. A pioneer has hard work to do, and generally gets so battered and spattered that people prefer another, even though they may accept the principle.' It would seem that nothing was said at this interview about the 'danger of swapping horses in crossing a stream.' On the contrary, the President emphatically appealed to that memorable precedent in Holy Writ when the children of Israel, being themselves about to cross a stream, were compelled to follow a new leader in order to get safely over. We all know that they could never have crossed the Jordan and entered into the promised land, had they refused to accept Joshua as their

leader, and some of us are not a little afraid that the same fatality which attended the ancient Moses is about to find a fresh illustration in the case of our modern Abraham. I am not here, as I have said before, to indulge in any personal imputation upon President Lincoln; and let me say, in passing, that he has received harder blows from some of his own followers — from Senator Wade, Winter Davis, General Fremont, and others who have been less open but not less violent in their denunciations of him — than he has from any of his opponents.[1] But I cannot help remarking that, in my humble opinion, he would have adopted a course worthy of all commendation if, instead of talking about swapping horses in crossing a stream, he could have been induced to say, six months ago, to the people of the United States something of this sort: 'You elected me fairly your President, and the President of the whole Union, four years ago. I have done my best to vindicate my title to the trust you conferred. The loyal States have nobly supported me. You have given me all the men and all the money I have asked for. You have borne and forborne with me in many changes of policy, and in all the assertions of arbitrary power to which I have thought it necessary to resort. I shall go on to the best of my ability to the end of my allotted term; but I am then ready to return to the ranks. No pride of

[1] An interesting assemblage of documents relating to this Presidential campaign was furnished by Mr. Charles A. Dana to the New York "Sun" of June 30, 1889. It appears that on the 18th of August, 1864, Horace Greeley wrote: "Mr. Lincoln is already beaten. He cannot be elected. If we had such a ticket as Grant, Butler, or Sherman for President, and Farragut for Vice, we could make a fight yet, and such a ticket we ought to have." On the 29th of August, 1864, John Jay wrote from Newport, advising that Mr. Lincoln should be asked to retire from the candidacy and suggesting that "such a letter might be prepared as would compel his [Lincoln's] acquiescence." On the 1st of September, 1864, Charles Sumner wrote: "It may be that Mr. Lincoln will see that we shall all be stronger and more united under another candidate. But if he does not see it so, our duty is none the less clear." On the following day, Sept. 2, 1864, Whitelaw Reid wrote to express similar views, and adding: "*We* think McClellan and Pendleton a very strong ticket, and fear the result."

place, no loss of patronage or power, shall induce me to stand in your way for a moment in your great struggle to restore the Union of our fathers. I do not forget how much of personal prejudice and party jealousy was arrayed against me at the outset. I do not forget how deeply political and sectional antagonisms entered into the causes of this rebellion. I am not insensible that the policy I have recently felt constrained to adopt has increased and aggravated those prejudices and those antagonisms. Select a new candidate. Choose a new President, against whom, and against whose friends, there will be less of preconceived hostility and hate; and may God give him wisdom and courage to save the country and restore the Union!' What a glorious example of patriotic self-denial and magnanimity this would have been! Who would not have envied President Lincoln the opportunity of exhibiting it? I am by no means sure it would not have re-elected him President in spite of himself. But he has thought fit to adopt the very reverse of this magnanimous and self-denying policy. He has quite forgotten that *one-term* principle to which he and I were committed as members of the old Whig party. We see him clinging eagerly to patronage and place. We see him demanding to be renominated, demanding to be re-elected, and claiming it almost as a test of patriotism and loyalty that we should all with one accord support him for four years more. We hear his Secretary of State comparing a vote against Abraham Lincoln to giving aid and comfort to the rebels, and even indulging in what is well called a portentous threat, that if the people shall dare to choose a new President, the Government will be abdicated, and let fall to pieces by itself, between the election and the inauguration. An absurd assumption, that a support of a government must necessarily involve a support of the policy of an existing administration, — this absurd and preposterous assumption, which has been put forward so arrogantly within the last year or two, is now pushed on to the monstrous length of maintaining that patriotism demands the re-election of an existing President in time of

war, even though a majority of the people may have no confidence in the capacity of the incumbent, either for conducting the war or for negotiating a peace. No changing Presidents in the hour of danger or struggle, is the cry. No swapping horses in crossing a stream. Everything else may be changed or swapped. You may change commanders-in-chief in the very face of the enemy; you may remove a gallant leader, as you did General McClellan, when he had just achieved one glorious victory, and was on his way to the almost certain achievement of another; you may swap Secretaries of War, as you did Cameron for Stanton; you may swap Secretaries of the Treasury, as you did Chase for Fessenden; you may swap Postmasters-General, as you have just done Blair for Dennison; you may change your candidates for the Vice-Presidency 'handy-dandy,' and leave Mr. Hannibal Hamlin to shoulder his musket in a Bangor militia company. Thus far you may go, but no further. You must not touch me. You must not change Presidents. Patriotism requires that Abraham Lincoln shall be exempt from all such casualties. And so we are all to be drummed into voting for him under a threat of the pains and penalties of treason. This extraordinary doctrine is getting to be a little contagious, and from some recent manifestations in my own part of the country I should suppose it was fast becoming a cherished dogma among office-holders of all grades, both national and State, that the only true patriotism consisted in keeping them all snugly in place, and that a failure to vote for any or all of them was little better than disloyalty to the Government. It is certainly very accommodating in our Presidents, and Governors, and Senators, and Representatives thus to save the people the trouble of an election. If the war lasts four years more, we may be spared the trouble of elections altogether. My friends, if the people are wise, they will give some of their public servants a lesson on this subject before it is too late, and teach them that the freedom of elections is too precious a privilege to be abandoned at the dictation of those who have already enjoyed a greater length of

service, as some of us think, than is altogether consistent with the public welfare and the public safety. The progress of this terrible war is leaving its mark on not a few of our most cherished privileges as free men. An overshadowing doctrine of necessity has obliterated not a few of the old constitutional limitations and landmarks of authority. An armed prerogative has gradually lifted itself to an appalling height throughout the land. But, thank Heaven, it is still in the power of the people to assert their right to a fair and free election of their rulers. And if they shall do so successfully, — whatever may be the result, — no nobler spectacle will have been witnessed in this land since it first asserted its title to be called a land of liberty. Let it be seen that the American people can go through a Presidential election freely and fairly, even during the raging storm of civil war, and our institutions will have had a glorious triumph, whatever party or whatever candidate may suffer a defeat.

. . . And here let me say that in this eager and desperate determination of the President and his party to prolong their official supremacy at all hazards, and even by the most unblushing exercise of all the patronage and power and influence of the Government on their own behalf, I find renewed reason for fearing that they cannot safely be trusted for an early restoration of 'the Union as it was, under the Constitution as it is.' No one can help seeing that it is by no means for their interest, as a party, to accomplish that result. They remember that, after the election of President Lincoln, they would have been in a minority in one, if not in both branches of Congress, had not Southern Senators and Representatives so rashly and wantonly withdrawn from their seats; and they see plainly that the return of the South to the family fold under the old Constitution forebodes the end and upshot of their dynasty. How, then, can we help fearing that they will willingly, if not systematically, postpone a result which is so likely to cut them off from any further enjoyment of power? The truth is, that the Republican party have so thriven and

fattened on this rebellion, and it has brought them such an overflowing harvest of power, patronage, offices, contracts, and spoils, and they have become so enamoured of the vast and overshadowing influence which belongs to an existing administration at such an hour, that they are in danger of forgetting that their country is bleeding and dying on their hands. It was in the power of that party, by giving countenance and encouragement to the Peace Convention of February, 1861, and to the measures it proposed, to confine secession to South Carolina and the Gulf States, to nip rebellion in the bud, and to restore peace within six months. Instead of which, the ultra wing of that party stood idly by, mocking at every effort to prevent and avert this great and terrible struggle, and rejoicing at the prospect of a clearer field for the more successful prosecution of their own fanatical views, and for the more undisputed establishment of their own party supremacy. Is it to be imagined that such men will be ready or willing to co-operate in bringing back Southern States to their old rights under the Constitution? Or is it proposed to bring them back as desolate and subjugated provinces, to be held in subjection by standing armies? Are we deliberately bent on having an American Poland on this continent? Are all our efforts for the abolition of black slavery to end in establishing a quasi-condition of white slavery? Is that what we are fighting for under the old Liberty flag of our fathers? . . .

We all know that the Administration has solemnly adopted the policy of complete emancipation as a necessary result of the rebellion and the war. We all know that, after having rallied the country for two years on the plain, direct, constitutional issue of enforcing the laws and restoring the Union, the President suddenly changed his hand, and, in the teeth of all his own declarations and arguments, put forth a solemn proclamation of universal emancipation. We all know that, at this moment, no man in the rebel States is allowed to return to his allegiance and resume his place as a loyal citizen, without swearing to support this proclamation, and that the

President has recently issued a formal manifesto, making abandonment of slavery a condition precedent for even the reception of any proposals for peace. Meantime Mr. Secretary Seward, for whom I have nothing but the kindest feelings, has expressly admitted, in his recent speech at Auburn, that there are those of the Republican party 'who want guarantees of swift and universal and complete emancipation, or they do not want the nation saved.' Is there not too much reason to apprehend that this class of men is more numerous than even Mr. Seward imagines, and that in the next four years they will have acquired — if they have not already acquired — a prevailing and paramount influence over the Administration? Mark the words: 'Men who want guarantees for swift, and universal, and complete emancipation, or they do not want the nation saved.' And this, I suppose, is what these men would call unconditional Unionism! And what have we heard of late from distinguished Republicans holding high official positions in my own Commonwealth of Massachusetts? I will not name them, to avoid personality, but I will give their precise language. From one we have the declaration that 'the appeal from sire to son should go on forever and forever until the last acre of Southern land, baptized by Massachusetts blood, should be rescued from the infidels to liberty.' From another equally distinguished Republican we have the even more distinct declaration that 'the Baltimore Convention and Abraham Lincoln *ask something more than the Union* as the condition of peace;' while from the same eminent source we are assured that a vote for Abraham Lincoln is to usher in the glorious day when the eloquence of Wendell Phillips may be enjoyed at Richmond and Charleston, as it is now enjoyed at New York and Boston. I may be told that this is only the rant and rhapsody of fanatical rhetoricians, but I cannot so regard it. What said the resolutions adopted at the same meeting? One of them concluded by the unequivocal announcement that 'the war must go on until the pride of the [Southern] leaders is humbled, their power broken, and

the civil and social structure of the South reorganized on the basis of free labor, free speech, and equal rights for all before the law.' There can be no misunderstanding the import of this language. It is clear, explicit, unequivocal. It does not pretend that the war is to be prosecuted for the restoration of the Union, but it expressly declares that it is not to be permitted to cease until the social structure of the South is reorganized, and from this declaration we may form, I think, a pretty distinct idea of the prospect before us if the Republican party remains in power. . . .

There is not a man in the loyal States who would not rejoice with all his heart and soul if African slavery could be safely and legitimately brought to an end on this whole continent; but I, for one, have never had a particle of faith that a sudden, sweeping, forcible emancipation could result in anything but mischief and misery for the black race, as well as the white. The proclamation, however, has been issued long ago, and its efficacy and its authority are to be the subjects of future experience and future adjudication. It was undoubtedly one of the greatest stretches of the doctrine of necessity — it was unquestionably one of the most startling exercises of the one-man power — which the history of human government, free or despotic, has ever witnessed. I have no disposition to question its wisdom or its authority as a measure adopted for securing greater success to our arms and an earlier termination of the war, — though I cannot help entertaining grave doubts on both points. But the idea that it is now to be made the pretext for prolonging that war, after the original and only legitimate end for which it was undertaken shall have been accomplished; the idea that we are to go on fighting and fighting for 'something more than the Union;' the idea that the war is not to be permitted to cease until the whole social structure of the South has been reorganized, — is one abhorrent to every instinct of my soul, to every dictate of my judgment, to every principle which I cherish as a

statesman and a Christian. It is a policy, too, in my opinion, utterly unconstitutional, and as much in the spirit of rebellion as almost anything which has been attempted by the Southern States. . . . A solemn oath to support the Constitution of the United States, as it is, still rests upon all our rulers, and a solemn obligation upon our whole people. We must pursue constitutional ends by constitutional means. What a triumph it would be if this Constitution of our fathers should come out, after all, unscathed from this fiery trial; if it should be seen to have prevailed, by its own innate original force and vigor, over all the machinations and assaults of its enemies! How proudly, then, might we hold it up before all mankind, in all time to come, as we have in all time past, as indeed the masterpiece of political and civil wisdom! How confidently could we then challenge all the world to show us a system of government of equal stability and endurance! It has already stood the strain of prosperity and of adversity. Foreign wars and domestic dissensions have hitherto assailed it in vain. The rains have descended, and the winds have blown, and the floods have come and beaten upon it, but it has not been shaken. The great final test is now upon it, — rebellion, revolution, civil war, in their most formidable and appalling shape. Oh, if we can but carry it through this last trial unharmed, we never again need fear for its security. Let us then hold it up — the Constitution, the whole Constitution, and nothing but the Constitution — as at once the end and the instrument of all our efforts. Let us demand a faithful adherence to all its forms and to all its principles. Let us watch jealously for the observance and fulfilment of all its provisions. And let us resolve that if it does fail and fall at last, it shall be by the madness of its enemies, and not by the supineness or willing surrender of its friends!

The active support given by Mr. Winthrop to the candidacy of General McClellan was criticised with much asperity by the Republican press. It was an

amusement of his to preserve newspaper-cuttings relating to himself — whether complimentary or the reverse — so far as they came to his notice, and particularly when he knew, or thought he knew, the names of the writers. It has occurred to me to reproduce two such articles, which I find on opposite pages of the same scrap-book, — one associated with the name of James C. Welling, then editor of the "National Intelligencer," afterward President of Columbian College, Washington; the other with the name of a gentleman then connected with a leading Boston newspaper, for many years an officer of a distinguished university, and long one of our resident-members. As his engagements do not appear to have thus far enabled him to contribute to our publications, my reprint will serve a double purpose, the article being a well-written one, conceived, apparently, more in sorrow than in anger, and undoubtedly reflecting at that time — perhaps still reflecting — the opinions of many intelligent and thoughtful persons.

[The "Daily Advertiser," Sept. 21, 1864.]

"Mr. Winthrop found himself in rather unusual company at the democratic ratification meeting in New York, on Saturday evening. At the stand from which he addressed his new associates, the meeting was called to order by Elijah F. Purdy, 'Grand Sachem' of the Tammany Club. At a neighboring stand Mr. Fernando Wood — a name redolent of anything but a savor of respectability and patriotism — was giving in his adhesion at the same time with Mr. Winthrop. At another, Mr. Oakey Hall was nominating James Gordon Bennett for Congress. And at a third the notorious Isaiah Rynders was venting his strenuous eloquence in a style

which has lost none of its repulsive characteristics. It was a strange company for Mr. Winthrop, of all men, to be found in. There could have been little in it to remind him pleasantly of his former political life. Even the superlative satisfaction of being accompanied by a gentleman (a rare sight then and there) 'whom he had known for so many years as the tried and trusty friend of Daniel Webster,'[1] great as that charm must be supposed to have been to Mr. Winthrop, could hardly have compensated him for an association so repugnant to every old memory and every personal trait of his own, and so little likely, we must add, to conduce to Mr. Winthrop's own fame.

"Mr. Winthrop has had his opportunities to establish himself in the goodwill, the confidence, and esteem of his fellow-citizens such as few men have enjoyed. He is one of those men who seem born to be public favorites. There is hardly any station in the gift of our people which did not once seem to be within his reach. To not a few stations of high dignity he has actually been called, — not, we will remark, by the suffrages or with the goodwill of those with whom he now consorts. We will not undertake now to discuss the reasons for that gradual and not quite voluntary withdrawal from public affairs, which for some years back has left Mr. Winthrop outside of the current. There may have been grievances on his part as well as mistakes. He may have found it difficult to accustom himself to the political companionship and to the claims for precedence of men whom he had not been used to regard as his worthy associates, but whom the vicissitudes of politics had made even more conspicuous than himself for the time, although perhaps less fully prepared for the long race of public life. We cannot conceive that any association thus brought about by the change of times and of issues can have been more distasteful than that which Mr. Winthrop has now formed; but still these considerations, and such as these, may have served to put him

[1] Hon. Hiram Ketchum.

in a position where his abilities and acquirements were lost to the public service, almost as much to the regret of many of his fellow-citizens as to his own.

The time came, however, when Mr. Winthrop could easily escape from this false position, — an hour when men of all parties were ready to bury the past and to remember nothing but present devotion to a country in peril. At the breaking out of the war many a record, with blots far worse than any upon Mr. Winthrop's, was closed and a fair page opened on which a new account could be entered. There is no difficulty in recalling names then in as false a position before the public as Mr. Winthrop's, but now distinguished by the public gratitude for services promptly and heartily rendered in the hour of danger. That opportunity, frankly improved according to the dictates, we will not say of interest and personal ambition, but of a generous patriotism, would have given Mr. Winthrop a foremost place in the regards of our people. The popular judgment asked only for evidence that a ready instinct impelled the statesman, even though retired, to spring to the defence of a country assailed by treason. If he forgot the past and remembered only his country, the people of all parties were ready to do the same, and to recognize generously all worthy service.

"It has been Mr. Winthrop's misfortune, or else his mistake, that he has never seemed responsive to this state of public feeling. His occasional but not frequent appearances in public have failed to establish a sympathy between himself and his fellow-citizens, with respect to the subject which lay nearest to their hearts. His utterances, if they have not been cold, have failed to convey the impression of any spontaneous and hearty zeal, and thus the barrier between him and the public, so far from being broken down, as it easily might have been, has been strengthened. It will not be overcome by the desperate leap which Mr. Winthrop has now made. Neither is the past to be retrieved, nor the future secured, nor any public service done, by the devotion of his efforts at

this hour to the advancement of a candidate on the Chicago platform. It is bootless for Mr. Winthrop to sneer at that document as a 'paper pellet of the brain, concocted in a midnight session of a resolution-committee during the hurly-burly of a Presidential nomination.' The country does not so regard it. The country takes the platform for what it is, — the solemnly declared policy of a great party, which aspires to the government of the nation. The country will not forget the choice that is now made by any public man. A mistake now, a neglect of this opportunity to set himself right upon the record, will be an error not to be retrieved.

"Mr. Winthrop is not alone in his failure to improve this final occasion for repairing past errors. There are other men — between whom and the public there has been a difference as to their deserts, and who have been struggling to extricate themselves from unfortunate entanglements or the consequences of old mistakes — who are now taking the final plunge. When the sun goes down on the 8th of November, the political waters will close finally over a good many ships which once put forth brave and trim, but were not staunch enough for the storms of these later years."

[The "National Intelligencer," Sept. 24, 1864.]

"The Boston 'Daily Advertiser,' apparently smarting under a sense of shame at its present political association with black spirits and white, — as the Daniel S. Dickinsons, Benjamin F. Butlers, and John W. Forneys, on the one hand, and the William Lloyd Garrisons, Frederick Douglasses, and Lucretia Motts, on the other, — has betaken itself, under the stress of an imagined fellow-feeling that makes it very kind, to commiserate the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop on his present co-operation with the Democratic party, and thinks that Mr. Winthrop must have found himself 'in rather unusual company' at the immense meeting held in New York to ratify General McClellan's nomination. As it is estimated that

nearly one hundred thousand persons participated in that great popular demonstration, we think it quite possible that there may be some room for the profound observation of the 'Advertiser.' We have no doubt that in such a crowd many persons could be found who would be antipathetic to a gentleman of Mr. Winthrop's scholarly tastes and political antecedents. But we have just as little doubt that in an assemblage which comprised among its officers such men as William B. Astor, James Gallatin, James T. Brady, and hosts of others, it would be quite possible to find other persons, who, by whatever test their 'respectability' may be tried (even as respectability is measured in Boston), would be deemed by the 'Advertiser' not entirely unworthy of political or social fellowship. But on this point we express an opinion with great diffidence. . . .

"In reply to the lament the 'Advertiser' utters over Mr. Winthrop, if there is anybody in or out of Boston who, whenever he was called to say 'what he thought of the Republic,' has manifested a more intense or sincere sympathy than he, with the cause of the country 'as assailed by treason,' we would be grateful to the 'Advertiser' for the indication of his name. We are not apprised of any such. And when our contemporary says that 'at the breaking out of the war many a record, with blots far worse than any upon Mr. Winthrop's, was closed and a fair page opened,' there is nobody who does not perceive that in so writing the 'Advertiser' merely essays to cover the smutches which cling to the past characters of many among its present political companions, who, after serving faithfully in the ranks of the 'slave Democracy' while it had honors to bestow and emoluments to offer, are now the accepted allies of our contemporary. It may well confess, both on its own account and on theirs, to some sensibility at the 'vicissitudes of politics' which have brought such a strange coalition of incongruous elements in the bosom of the same party; but we think that, as well on the score of established patriotism as of consistent adherence to political prin-

ciple, Mr. Winthrop has no indulgence to ask from any quarter, and least of all from the 'Daily Advertiser.'

"On the 4th of October, 1861, the 'Advertiser' thought it the part of patriotism and of political principle to hold the following language: —

"'We are sorry to see a disposition in several quarters to represent the Republican party, mainly on the strength of Mr. Sumner's unfortunate speech at Worcester, as a party of emancipation, a "John Brown party," a party that desires to carry on this war as a war of abolition. The resort to such arguments and misrepresentations has a tendency to weaken the confidence of the people in the management of the war, to inspire unfounded suspicions as to the purposes for which they are asked to enlist and to contribute their money, and to lead them to elevate into undue importance the mad counsels of men like Mr. Sumner, — a tendency which we must deeply deplore, not as Republicans, but as American citizens, anxious for the welfare of our country. . . . We hold it for an incontestible truth that neither men nor money will be forthcoming for this war if once the people are impressed with the belief that the abolition of slavery and not the defence of the Union is its object, and that its original purpose is to be converted into a cloak for some new design of seizing this opportunity for the destruction of the social system of the South. The people are heart and soul with their Government in support of any constitutional undertaking; we do not believe that they will follow it, if they are made to suspect that they are being decoyed into the support of any unconstitutional and revolutionary designs.'

"It is possible, we submit, that, without entirely forfeiting the character of a patriot, Mr. Winthrop may think now as the 'Advertiser' thought less than three years ago. He may have now, as the 'Advertiser' had in the month of October, 1861, no taste for consorting with 'a party of emancipation,' a 'John Brown party,' a 'party that desires to carry on this war as an Abolition war.' He may think now, as the 'Advertiser' professed to think in 1861, that the counsels of Mr. Sumner were 'mad;' and now that these counsels, under the acknowledged leadership of that distinguished Senator, are paramount in the legislation and military operations of the country, Mr. Winthrop may deplore them, like the 'Advertiser' in October, 1861, not as the adherent of any party, but 'as an American citizen, anxious for the welfare

of our country.' It may be that Mr. Winthrop, in the 'vicissitudes of politics,' has not been able, like the 'Daily Advertiser,' to accomplish the Irish feat of 'turning his back on himself,' and hence, to change the figure, while he sees some people willing to trim their sail to every breeze that blows, he may have been content to drop 'outside of the current,' which, in wafting him to political promotion, he may fear, even as the 'Advertiser' professed to fear, will lead to the wreck of the Union and the ruin of his country. As the 'Advertiser' is at some loss to account for the 'considerations' which have seemed to put him in a position where his abilities and acquirements are lost to the public service, we beg to suggest that a sufficient explanation of the melancholy fact (for it is a melancholy fact) may be found in the steadfastness with which he has maintained his political principles. If by such constancy and fidelity he is now placed in a 'false position' before the public, it can only be a public which counts political tergiversation among the virtues of patriotism, and holds apostasy to principle in higher esteem than honest convictions maintained at any cost.

"If the 'Advertiser,' in its search for the 'considerations' which may have induced Mr. Winthrop to stand aloof from the prevailing political influences in Massachusetts, and in the present Administration, should need further light on the subject, it may perhaps derive additional illumination from its own columns. For instance, on the 7th of October, 1861, returning to the subject then, as now, uppermost in the thoughts of conservative men, it held the following language: —

"'The history of the antislavery movement in this country will hereafter rank as one of the strongest cases where human impatience and devotion to a Utopian idea has blinded men's eyes to the practical good which Providence has placed ready at hand. The insane folly of the abolitionists killed out years ago the emancipation party which at one time had the actual control of Virginia, and promised to eradicate slavery in other Border States. The over-nice scruples of the same extremists some years later elected Mr. Polk and insured the consummation of the Texas scheme, which they affected to deprecate. Their follies and excesses have

still later furnished the Southern extremists and their allies with a whole arsenal of weapons, which have been turned without reason but with marked effect against the Republicans, the only political party which has pretended to recognize any moral duty connected with slavery as resting upon the nation or upon the citizens of the Free States. What the abolitionists affected to desire, that they have prevented; what they affected to deprecate, that they have insured. Those who wished to do something in the only practical way against the extension of slavery they have weakened and loaded with a heavy weight of odium. The same folly is now repeated by those who urge the conversion of this war into a war for emancipation. They clamor for a blow to be struck against slavery itself, unmindful that Providence has already foreshadowed the decay and end of that institution in such terms as are clearly intelligible even to human apprehension. They are eager to be made the instruments of God's displeasure against an abhorred system, neglecting the palpable determination of Providence that the system shall perish by the suicidal folly of those who uphold it. No more instructive lesson could be left for future imitators of the selfishness, arrogance, and wickedness of the ruling Southern interest than is given in its destruction by its own hands and in consequence of its own grasping and treacherous conduct; but foolish zealots would fain weaken the force of this example, and would leave it for future ages to believe that wickedness has perished, not by its own venom, but by some external interference.'

"What if Mr. Winthrop, with the additional lights now before him, setting its truth in the blaze of a noonday sun, should think now, as the 'Advertiser' thought in 1861, that 'the folly of those who urged the conversion of this war into an emancipation war' is the same 'insane folly' which at other periods in our history 'has blinded men's eyes to the practical good which Providence has placed ready to hand'? What if Mr. Winthrop should think now, as the 'Advertiser' thought on the 7th of October, 1861, that it is only 'foolish zealots' who would fain weaken a great historical lesson by thrusting themselves forward where they are not wanted, to 'make themselves the instruments of God's displeasure against an abhorred system,' thereby 'neglecting the palpable determination of Providence that the system should perish by the suicidal folly of those who uphold it'? Shall it be cited to the reproach of Mr. Winthrop that, after more than three years of war, when the 'insane folly' against which the 'Advertiser' prophe-

sied in October, 1861, has become history written in blood, he should be only more and more of the same mind that he was in 1861? Is it required that he should add self-stultification to the odium of political inconsistency, in order to establish a *status* for sagacity, according to the notion of that useful quality current among certain people in Boston? We ask the question. It is one for others to answer."

Extracts from Mr. Winthrop's letters are again resumed: —

[Oct. 23, 1864.] Thanks for your compliments to speeches with which you do not altogether agree. As to the New York meeting and your indisposition to 'train in such company,' I think I could find as bad company on the other side. At any rate, among the officers or speakers at that meeting were James Gallatin, William H. Aspinwall, Royal Phelps, John Jacob Astor, Henry Grinnell, our old friend Tallmadge, and other Conservative men of high standing, to say nothing of Gov. Joel Parker of New Jersey and Judge Daly. In accepting the invitation, however, I did not look to the company, but to the Cause, and I could come to no other conclusion after giving the subject my best consideration. The chance of electing McClellan is a very small one, but the movement has done good already by stirring up the Administration, and through them the Army. Sheridan's victory was the first fruits, and I hope Richmond will soon fall. If we can frighten the Administration into finishing up the war themselves, instead of prolonging it (as I think they have heretofore been willing to do) in order to accomplish their peculiar policy and secure their own re-election, the result will be for the benefit of all concerned. A very insolent tone prevails here towards all who cannot find it in their conscience to support Lincoln. I was fully prepared to encounter abuse, but I have been a good deal disgusted by the patronizing tone of a letter in the 'Advertiser,' purporting to come from a 'sor-

rowful' friend of mine, who expressed the hope that, in view of my 'honorable antecedents and pure personal character,' my 'defection' might be received in silence! Defection from what? Not from the Republican party, which I never consented to join, — nor certainly from the Democratic party, with which I have never voted, save as a choice of evils. The McClellan managers, by the bye, think so well of my New London speech that they have had it stereotyped, and, besides my own edition, 200,000 copies are being circulated as campaign documents. I fear you will not apply for many extra ones. My nomination at the head of the Democratic electoral ticket in this State was without my knowledge, but, feeling as I did, I could not refuse it, though I was sorry to be placed in a sort of antagonistic position to Everett. At the time I started for New York, he did not seem to have quite made up his mind with regard to his own course, and we have since agreed that nothing shall disturb those personal relations which have so long existed between us. This is a time when men must think for themselves and act upon their own convictions. Misrepresentation apart, I have no fear of my war record, and if I ever spoke from the depths of my own convictions it has been in this canvass.

[Nov. 7.] Yesterday's mail brought me a New York 'Times' of the 5th, containing a tirade against myself a column long, as well as a notification that I had just been elected in the same city a Vice-President of the American Bible Society. Thus the bane and the antidote may be said to have come together. To-day I get from anonymous sources two clippings without date, by which it appears that our old acquaintance the Howadji is belaboring me in different parts of the country, using as a stick the name and fame of my poor kinsman Theodore. It appears, this time, that I am 'a follower of Calhoun,' who must be a good deal tickled by this assertion if he is in any condition to appreciate its humor. I don't think Curtis really means to be unfair, and I rather like him. In fact, if all accounts are true, I like him better than President Lincoln does.

As the allusions in the foregoing extract may be obscure to some readers, it is as well to mention that our late corresponding member, George William Curtis, was long familiarly known as "the Howadji," from the titles of two of his early works, and that an amusing story — probably exaggerated — was continually cropping up in the newspapers to the effect that Abraham Lincoln originally conceived an unreasoning distaste for his society, on account of his habit of parting his hair in the middle, — a practice which then savored of effeminacy to the unsophisticated Western mind. In the first volume of Mr. Curtis's Orations and Addresses, published in 1893, will be found a lecture on "Political Infidelity," stated by the editor to have been "delivered more than fifty times in the course of 1864 and 1865," in which Mr. Winthrop figures to the extent of a couple of pages, from which I quote the following spirited outburst: —

"Young men of Massachusetts, young men of New England, two Winthrops appeal to you in this hour of national peril, both intelligent, refined, accomplished. The one living, supported by Fernando Wood and Isaiah Rynders, cheered by Jefferson Davis and every rebel, by the London 'Times' and the men who built and sailed and fought the 'Alabama,' by every enemy of the American government and principle in the world, — it is Robert C. Winthrop, who follows John C. Calhoun, and bids you follow him. The other dead, fallen in the first fierce battle of the war to maintain the government, dead in his beautiful youth, full of hope, full of faith, full of fidelity to the American principle and the American people, beckoning to you as he beckoned to his brave boys in the very moment when he fell forward into death and glory, — it is Theodore Winthrop, who follows liberty and the Union, and who whispers to you, 'Follow me, follow me.'"

The article in the New York "Times," above alluded to, is headed "Degenerate Sons," and is also too long to cite in full, but its most stinging passage is the following: —

"The student of history hereafter will hear with profound surprise that the purest of the New England Puritans, in the great crisis of his country's history, placed himself on the side of oppression against the party of liberty, excusing slavery, misrepresenting its opponents, urging a base compromise and a peace which would have wrecked liberty and country altogether, condemning that legislation which will be the admiration of all time, and throwing the influence of an accomplished scholar and gentleman, and of a name most respected for its association with the upholding of human rights, on the side of a most base, cowardly, reactionary, and oppressive party, which would willingly see the whole North beneath a slave oligarchy. We can imagine how that stern old Puritan, John Winthrop, who was ready to choose a wilderness for conscience' sake, would frown on this unworthy position of his descendant. How he can reconcile it with his reason, his knowledge, or his conscience, we do not wish to know. We regret it most for his own sake, and the sake of a noble, historic name."

Extracts from Mr. Winthrop's letters are here resumed: —

[Nov. 16, 1864.] I have received from you neither letter of sympathy nor visit of consolation; but if you read my little speech at the Sailors' Fair the night after the election, you will see that my equanimity has not been seriously disturbed. I confess that I hoped we should have received a larger share of the electoral vote, but it would have been little short of a miracle to have prevailed against all the power and patronage of the Administration, civil and military. If it be true, as I hear it credibly stated, that McClellan's popular vote is larger than that of Lincoln in 1860, and that a change of only 30,000

votes, judiciously sprinkled over different States, would have reversed the result, it is certainly something to be proud of, — or, as some people might prefer to say, something to be ashamed of. You claim, to be sure, most of the good company; but as I found myself associated at the polls here with such men as Dr. James Jackson, Benjamin R. Curtis, George W. Lyman, Ticknor, William H. Gardiner, William Gray, Colonel Aspinwall, Chandler Robbins, Dr. Blagden, Hillard, and others of whom I spare you the enumeration, I am content, — however much I may regret that you and Everett and Levi Lincoln, and a hundred others, thought differently. At any rate, I rejoice that the election is safely over, and that Sumner's brutal speech has not been accepted as the keynote to the policy of the victors. Everybody else has spoken with moderation and good feeling. The President, especially, received the announcement of his election in a manner to conciliate every one. I don't know that I can quite indorse all that Everett said of him last evening; but as I came in for a share of the compliments of that speech, I can hardly question its justice.

[Dec. 10.] I dined yesterday with William Amory — the Friday Club — all of whom, as it turned out, had voted McClellan except Agassiz and Chief Justice Bigelow. Caleb Cushing was there as a guest, but his politics I doubt if any one can accurately define except himself. He and I walked home together about midnight, when he volunteered the remark that my New London speech was the most effective one on that side, and that if McClellan's cause had been uniformly advocated in the same spirit, and the campaign run on those lines, he might have been triumphantly elected. I had already learned, on good authority, that both Lincoln and Seward had expressed a substantially similar opinion, which I consider one of the greatest compliments ever paid me, there being no better judges of the ability of campaign speeches than these three men. Do not, however, repeat all this as coming from me, as it would only sound like vanity

on my part; but it must one day go on record. Speaking of McClellan, I only recently read a letter of his to William H. Aspinwall, written before his nomination, which confirms all I had believed in regard to his views. To my mind, Everett's speech to the electors gives undeserved importance to the letter of Alexander H. Stephens. I like Stephens personally, but I think he always writes for momentary effect, and he has written on both sides of the Rebellion. He is a man of impulse and prejudice, who has long been at odds with Jefferson Davis. Furthermore, Everett's suggestion that there was 'no display of force' at the late election does not seem to me quite accurate, in view of the cannon at the corners of the streets in Providence and Butler's array of regiments in New York.

[Jan. 22, 1865.] I am very glad that you and other friends are so well pleased with what you are good enough to call 'the justice and the eloquence' of my tribute to Everett at Faneuil Hall. I was better satisfied with it myself than I generally am with my own efforts, and I certainly spoke from my whole heart. His death was a great shock to me, and I shall miss him profoundly. When I first entered the Legislature he honored me with a flattering degree of confidence, and for some thirty years back he has been perhaps the one man, living here in Boston, upon whose united regard and prudence, upon whose commingled 'blood and judgment,' as Shakspere hath it, I could rely at a pinch. If, early in my career, I had made a speech and were about to print it, — or had written an address and were about to deliver it, — I could send it freely and confidently for his examination, sure that his friendship would induce him to make any suggestions which he thought for my advantage, while his judgment was a guaranty that they would be good and reasonable. In later life we had one or two differences of opinion upon public questions, but they never cast even a momentary shadow over our relations. His uniform kindness and confidence continued to the end. Of his scholarship and his oratory I

was, as you know, a warm admirer. I delighted in listening to him on great occasions, considering him, in his peculiar line, unrivalled.

On the 4th of April, 1865, by invitation of the City Council, Mr. Winthrop was one of the speakers at a Faneuil Hall meeting to celebrate the fall of Richmond, with reference to which I find the following entry in his diary: —

No Conservative spoke but myself. Frederick Douglass (whom I never saw before) did well, and other colored men took part. It was odd company for me, but I can rejoice at the success of the Union arms in any company.

His remarks were necessarily brief, and, after some expressions of congratulation suitable to the occasion, he added: —

Let me express the hope that in all our rejoicings, now and hereafter, we shall exhibit a spirit worthy of those who recognize a Divine Hand in what has occurred. Let no boastful exultations mingle with our joy; no brutal vindictiveness tarnish our triumph. Let us indulge no spirit of vengeance or of extermination toward the conquered, nor breathe out threatenings and slaughter against foreign nations. The great work of war accomplished, the even greater work of peace will remain to be undertaken, and it will demand all our energies and all our endurance. Let us show our gratitude to God by doing all we can to mitigate the sorrows and sufferings of those upon whom the calamities of war have fallen. Let us exert ourselves with fresh zeal in ministering to the sick and wounded, in binding up the broken hearts, in providing for widows and orphans, for refugees and freedmen, in reuniting, as fast and as far as we can, the chords of friendship and good-will wherever they have been shattered or swept away, and thus exhibit our land in that noblest of all atti-

tudes, — the only attitude worthy of a Christian nation, — that of seeking to restore and to maintain peace and brotherhood at home and abroad. Thus only can our triumph be worthily celebrated.

Six days later, on the 10th of April, he was invited to address a similar meeting, in celebration of Lee's surrender; but he was about starting for New York to attend the funeral of a young kinsman of his, Frederick Winthrop, who, after a brilliant military career, during which he had attained the rank of Brigadier-General, had just been killed at Five Forks. Two days after his return came the news of President Lincoln's assassination, the circumstances of which were so atrocious, and the grief excited by his loss so intense, as to create, for the time being, in some quarters, a feeling of resentment against persons who had been prominent in opposing his re-election, of whom, in Massachusetts, Mr. Winthrop had been chief. He was privately waited on by a Republican friend, who explained that not only had remonstrances been made against his being asked to speak at Faneuil Hall on the subject, but that it was thought wise for him to make his health an excuse for not being present at the meeting, lest in the inflamed state of the public mind he should be subjected to some manifestation of disrespect. He replied that, so far as speaking was concerned, he much preferred to pay a tribute to Mr. Lincoln later and in his own way, but that his absence on such an occasion might be misconstrued. He accordingly attended on foot, and was unable to perceive, either in the streets or on the platform, that he was treated with anything but courtesy. At the Annual Meeting of this Society, a few days after-

ward, in introducing, on behalf of the Standing Committee, a series of patriotic resolutions, he took occasion to say: —

The awful crime which was perpetrated at Washington on Friday last would have filled our hearts with horror, even had it only involved the life of any of the humblest of our fellow-citizens. But it has taken from us the chosen Chief Magistrate of the nation, — the man who, of all other men, could be least spared to the administration of our government, — the man who was most trusted, most relied on, most beloved by the loyal people of the Union. Beyond all doubt, the life of President Lincoln was a thousandfold the most precious life in our whole land; and there are few of us, I think, who would not willingly have rescued it at the risk, or even at the sacrifice, of our own. The cheerful courage, the shrewd sagacity, the earnest zeal, the imperturbable good-nature, the untiring fidelity to duty, the ardent devotion to the Union, the firm reliance upon God which he has displayed during his whole administration; and the eminent moderation and magnanimity, both towards political opponents and public enemies, which he has manifested since his recent and triumphant re-election, — have won for him a measure of regard, of respect, and of affection, such as no other man of our age has ever enjoyed. The appalling and atrocious crime, of which he has been the victim, will only deepen the impression of his virtues and his excellences, and he will go down to history with the double crown of the foremost patriot and the foremost martyr of this great struggle against treason and rebellion.

It so happened that the volume of Mr. Winthrop's collected addresses and speeches covering the period of the civil war was published in 1867, during a long absence of his in Europe, and when he was not in the way of observing all that was said of it by the press. Of the notices which reached him the most discriminating

was one which appeared in the "Round Table," a short-lived New York weekly, — a notice headed "Robert C. Winthrop," too long to quote, — combining many compliments with some pleasant satire, and apparently from the pen of a total stranger, as the writer says in opening: —

"No one, of course, could keep even the surface run of politics without knowing Mr. Winthrop's name, as the head of the anti-radicals of Massachusetts, — that dauntless, outnumbered few, that phalanx of political nine-pins, standing up heroically at each election to be bowled over as part of the national game of suffrage. But to our remembrance we had never before read or heard a speech of his, and he was to us as merely historical a character as Lycurgus."

To his own copy of this article Mr. Winthrop appended some manuscript comments, from which I extract the following: —

Few cleverer things than this have ever been written about me or my books. The sharp contrast presented between what I said in opposing President Lincoln's re-election, in October, 1864, and what I said of him after his assassination, in April, 1865, is very telling, and I perceived this would be so when the volume went to press. But the change was not so much in my opinions as in the attitude of Mr. Lincoln. Nothing is more certain — or, at least, more clear to my own mind — than that, during the last six months of his life, his whole policy was modified, if not absolutely reversed. The strong opposition which was made to his re-election, and even to his nomination, would seem to have awakened him to a sense that he must adopt a new course. He abandoned all interference with his generals. He gave Grant *carte blanche*, and allowed him to carry on the campaign entirely on military principles, manifesting meantime a most amiable and

conciliatory disposition toward the South, and seemingly ready to exert all his influence to secure peace. He even took his carpet-bag and went down to James River to meet the Southern Commissioners, in order to leave nothing undone to promote this result. Those who had opposed his re-election might thus deplore his loss without a particle of inconsistency, and his death by the bullet of a madman took away all heart for remembering anything but his virtues and his patriotism.

[July 23, 1865.] From what little I have seen of contested elections in England, I imagine it is not uncommon there for public men to be unexpectedly hooted; but after a somewhat stirring political career of more than thirty years in this country, I met with my first experience of anything of the sort the other day, and, of all places in the world, at Harvard. Two years ago, as you may remember, I resigned my Presidency of the Alumni, but I still attend their meetings, and I made a point of being present at the one on Commencement Day, as matters connected with the proposed Memorial Hall were to be discussed. Holmes, who succeeded me as President, was late in arriving; and not to delay business, some one suggested that I, as ex-President, should take the chair, which, as a purely temporary and *pro formâ* arrangement, I proceeded to do; when, from different quarters, there proceeded a perceptible number of grunts (I will not call them groans) of disapproval. I, of course, took no notice, and proceeded with the business until Holmes arrived; but on subsequently asking Charles G. Loring what it meant, he frankly told me that there still exists soreness about my opposition to Lincoln, and that protests had been made against my being asked to speak at the Commemoration exercises two days later. I had no wish to speak there, — indeed, as a rule, I am too often asked to speak and decline half my invitations, — but the little demonstration I have described is significant of the temper of the times. Undeterred by it, I returned to Cambridge on Friday, breakfasted with General Meade at the Porcellian Club, and assisted at the

exercises and dinner. It was a fine occasion, richly merited by our young heroes, but we sadly missed Everett for the eloquence. . . . Our New England people are full of apprehension that the Union is to be restored too soon, and that the Southern States are about to reorganize themselves upon their old principles. For myself, I do not see what Johnson could do except what he is doing and has done. The idea of holding the South in subjection for an indefinite period, until negro suffrage can be forced upon them, is abhorrent to me. Punish the immediate authors and abettors of the rebellion if you will, but it will not be wise to make too many martyrs for the South to canonize. It should be remembered, moreover, how many Southern statesmen have been educated to the doctrine of State Rights and Secession, and that what, from our point of view, would have been criminal, was with them the simple carrying out of their own conscientious convictions.

XI.

A great happiness was in store for Mr. Winthrop in his marriage, Nov. 15, 1865, to Adele, widow of John Eliot Thayer of Boston, and daughter of Francis Granger of Canandaigua, one of the most valued of his political and personal friends.[1] He had known her from girlhood. They had in common hosts of friends, a real love of hospitality and cultivated social intercourse, coupled with an active interest in the promotion of charitable and religious undertakings; but fortunately they were

[1] Francis Granger was candidate for Vice-President in 1836, on the ticket with General Harrison, became Postmaster-General in the latter's Cabinet, served a number of years in Congress, and twice ran for Governor in New York, where a section of the Whig party for some time known as "Silver Grays" took their name from the color of his hair. His father, Gideon Granger, was a Cabinet minister under both Jefferson and Madison.

not alike in temperament, as Mr. Winthrop's uncertain health often made him despondent, while his wife's native buoyancy of disposition supplied the precise tonic he needed.

[July 4, 1866.] When I saw the President at the White House in May, he impressed me more agreeably than ever before, and however much I may regret some of the incidents of his course, I rejoice he has made a stand against the extremists. Lincoln, I believe, would have done the same, though with much more tact and a greater chance of success. Johnson is certainly an able writer, — more so than I had given him credit for. Dean Milman says his December message was equal to any state paper of England's best days. The Sumner-Stevens faction are, in my judgment, the most pestilent fellows in the land, and it is pleasant to see them 'hoist with their own petard.' Whatever may come of the Philadelphia Convention, it is called in the true spirit. Goodwill and kindness will do more to restore the Union than all the Constitutional amendments that can be devised. I have done my best to raise money to alleviate the individual cases of distress you mention among our friends, but I am appalled by all I hear of widespread suffering among Southern widows and orphans. I dare say most of them were flagrant rebels, but I cannot consider this a reason for allowing them to starve. I am afraid that I am a poor hater, and should be constrained to plead guilty to the charge of having *parum odisse malos cives*.

[Sept. 17.] You will have noticed that I declined to head the Massachusetts delegation to Philadelphia, where I had some reason to think the Chairmanship of the Convention awaited me. Since then Blatchford, Raymond, and Co. have vainly endeavored to impress me into addressing their mass meeting in New York. The truth is, such acceptances would readily be construed as a willingness on my part to stay in politics, which I really loathe more than ever. My wife is

anxious to go abroad on a long absence, and this seems a favorable time to take up the position of 'independent voter,' and leave the field to younger men. Moreover, though I heartily concurred with the general views of those by whom the Convention was called, I have no faith that I could have accomplished any good there. . . . Our extreme Radicals have learned that they thrive best upon mischief, and they will do their utmost to keep the country by the ears. There are, however, some notable exceptions. A conversation I recently had with John A. Andrew has led me to augur well of his moderation should he succeed Sumner in the Senate, which, I hear, is talked of. He is young enough to render important service there.

Mr. Winthrop's letter declining to be a delegate to the National Union Convention at Philadelphia in August, 1866, is to be found in full in his second volume, and closed as follows: —

Congress has ample means of protecting itself, and of protecting the country, from the presence of disloyal men in the halls of legislation, by the simple exercise of the power which each branch possesses, of deciding without appeal on the qualifications of its own members. Had the case of each individual Senator or Representative elected from the States lately in rebellion been taken up by itself, and fairly considered on its own merits, agreeably to the wise suggestions of President Johnson, no one could have complained, whatever might have been the result. This great question of representation, however, is not a question which concerns only the Southern States, who, I know, are regarded by not a few unrelenting men as having forfeited all rights which the Northern States are bound to respect. It is a question which concerns the Constitution and the whole country. It was to enforce and vindicate that Constitution that blood and treasure have been poured out so lavishly during the late four years of civil

war. Who could have believed in advance that a year and a half after that war had ended, and after the Union had been rescued and restored so far as our gallant armies and navies could accomplish it, nearly one-third of the States should still be seen knocking in vain at the doors of the Capitol, and should be denied even a hearing in the councils of the nation? Such a course may, indeed, be calculated to prolong the predominance of a party, but it seems to me utterly inconsistent with the supremacy of the Constitution. I have no disposition, however, to indulge in any imputations either upon parties or upon individuals. I hope that a spirit of forbearance and moderation will prevail at Philadelphia, notwithstanding the insulting and proscriptive tone in which the Convention has been assailed by so many of the opponents of the President of the United States. But I shall be greatly disappointed, I confess, if through the influence of that Convention, or through some other influence, the people of the whole country are not soon aroused to the danger of allowing the Constitution to be longer the subject of partial and discretionary observance on the part of those who are sworn to support it. It is vain to offer test oaths to others, if we fail to fulfil our own oaths. The necessities of a state of war may be an excuse for many irregularities, both legislative and executive. But now that, by the blessing of God, a state of peace has been restored to us, we are entitled to the Constitution and the Union in all their legitimate authority and extent. Nothing, in my judgment, could be of worse influence upon the future career of our country than that Congress should even seem to be holding in abeyance any provisions of the Constitution, until they shall have been changed under duress, in order to suit the opinions, or secure the interests, of a predominant party.

Many conservative men in different parts of the country were sanguine of success at the November elections and deplored Mr. Winthrop's withdrawal, as

is shown not merely by private letters, but by the following extracts from two newspapers which I have not been able to identify: —

"Mr. Winthrop's indisposition to attend the Convention at Philadelphia is much regretted by his numerous friends there assembled. Had he been present, he would undoubtedly have been chosen to preside, and after the elections of November have harmonized the country and restored the Union, he would have found himself standing in a high position of honor and usefulness. Such an opportunity for important and honorable service is not often presented to an individual, however exalted his ability and attainments, and it is a matter of regret, both on his own account and that of the nation, when an eminent citizen is unable to take advantage of an opportunity which cannot be expected to occur more than once in a lifetime."

"Mr. Winthrop has indorsed Mr. Johnson's Presidency, which is more than Mr. Johnson would do for Mr. Winthrop's Speakership. The former used to have a special spite against the eminent representative from Boston, by whose modes of life his own primitive habits were rebuked. The calm undemonstrative manners of the polished Speaker probably struck him as being of a patrician character, and thus all the 'plebeian' in his nature was aroused and irritated. . . . The course of political events has brought the two men together, as prominent members of the same party, and the President might call his ablest and most distinguished supporter in New England to the State Department, should Mr. Seward carry into effect the intention often attributed to him, of retiring to the shades of Auburn. Some of the Southrons are displeased that Mr. Winthrop did not attend the Philadelphia Convention, but that is a feeling which will pass away like a summer's cloud."

If, on one or two subsequent occasions, Mr. Winthrop's name figured prominently in connection with some political meeting, it was without his knowledge and against his will. If, in some few subsequent elections, he was persuaded to declare his personal preferences for a particular candidate, he made a point of doing so briefly and unobtrusively. What may be termed the controversial period of his life — a period covering nearly a third of a century — ended with the year 1866, by his own choice and to his own permanent satisfaction. Thenceforth his time was devoted to objects and to institutions, concerning which there could be but few differences of opinion, in some of which he had long been interested, while with others — one, in particular — he now first became identified. As sometimes happens to public men, it had been his good fortune, in the course of his political career, to arouse, by his printed speeches, an active interest in himself on the part of persons residing at a distance whom he had never seen, or whose acquaintance he did not make till long afterward. One of these persons proved to be George Peabody, then a banker in London, afterward the famous philanthropist, who was accustomed to say that if it were in his power to choose a President of the United States "that office would fall upon Robert C. Winthrop." The latter would hardly have been human if he had not been flattered by the repeated expression of a preference which, though not wholly unprecedented, was certainly uncommon; and if anything further had been needed to endear Mr. Peabody to Mr. Winthrop, it would have been the gift by the former — by his own volition, and

solely to gratify the latter — of the sum of $20,000 to this Society. Like most men of exceptional wealth, Mr. Peabody had a very decided will of his own, but he was in the habit, in the latter part of his life, of seeking Mr. Winthrop's advice upon a variety of subjects, more particularly his educational foundations in this country, at the head of two of which Mr. Winthrop willingly consented to serve: the Peabody Museum of Archæology and Ethnology at Cambridge, and the great Peabody Trust for Southern Education, an object into which he entered heart and soul. The winter of 1867 was largely occupied in visits to Washington and elsewhere, to set on foot this munificent undertaking, but in the ensuing spring Mr. Winthrop went abroad, returning home in the autumn of 1868. Some particulars of this, his third visit to Europe, may be found in the "Reminiscences of Foreign Travel," already cited, as well as in the tenth volume of the first series of this Society's Proceedings, which contains letters written by him from abroad to our late Vice-President, Charles Deane.

The later volumes of Mr. Winthrop's collected Addresses and Speeches contain nearly one hundred and fifty utterances, of greater or less length, in various places and on various occasions, from 1866 to 1886, to say nothing of published letters and other papers. I have no intention of specifically alluding to a tithe of these productions, which include much historical material, together with tributes to distinguished men in different countries with whom he had been personally associated, and to honored members of this Society. I shall refer only, and in proper order, to those which

attracted most attention. In January, 1869, he delivered at the Lowell Institute in Boston the first of a series of historical lectures upon Massachusetts and its Early History. In February, 1870, he pronounced an elaborate but discriminating eulogy at the funeral of his friend George Peabody, whose benefactions to the poor of London had resulted in his body being brought across the sea with almost royal honors, and in his obsequies being attended by a son of Queen Victoria. On the 21st of December of the same year, he was the orator of the day at Plymouth, at the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers. From his oration on this occasion — one of the longest of his commemorative productions[1] — I quote a single passage because it exhibits the general character of his religious views, which, to some devout persons of his own communion, seemed almost as misguided as his political opinions, — a passage characterized by the "American Churchman" as "pretty, but shallow": —

[1] In the "New Englander" for April, 1871, is to be found a noticeable article entitled "Winthrop and Emerson on Forefathers' Day," describing and contrasting Mr. Winthrop's oration at Plymouth, and that of Ralph Waldo Emerson before the New England Society of New York. Of the former it says, "All are agreed that Mr. Winthrop performed his part in a way truly noble and satisfactory. Those who were permitted to be within the sound of his voice in that service count it one of the fortunate days of their lives. The occasion was so grand in itself, and the ancestral associations came flocking back upon him so, that the orator was lifted out of himself and borne upward into a most commanding position. All his resources of previous culture were brought into the fullest and happiest play. It was a felicitous day for him as well as for those who heard him. Nothing he has ever done will be remembered to his honor more surely and certainly than this." His own scribbling diary contains the following brief entry: "Everybody seemed pleased, and, for a wonder, I was almost satisfied with myself. *Laus Deo.*"

Few persons, I presume, will doubt that had the Church of England, between 1608 and 1620, been what it is to-day, and its Bishops and Archbishops such in life and in spirit as those who have recently presided at London and Canterbury, Brewster and Bradford would hardly have left Scrooby, and the 'Mayflower' might long have been employed in less interesting ways than in bringing Separatists to Plymouth Rock. As that church and its prelates then were, let us thank God that such Separatists were found! An Episcopalian myself, by election as well as by education, and warmly attached to the forms and the faith in which I was brought up; believing that the Church of England has rendered inestimable service to the cause of religion in furnishing a safe and sure anchorage in so many stormy times, when the minds of men were 'tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine;' and prizing the Prayer-Book as second only to the Bible in the richness of its treasures of prayer and praise, — I yet rejoice as heartily as any Congregationalist who listens to me, that our Pilgrim Fathers were Separatists. I rejoice, too, that the Puritan Fathers of Massachusetts, who followed them to these shores ten years afterward, though, to the last, they 'esteemed it their honor to call the Church of England their dear mother, and could not part from their native country where she specially resideth, without much sadness of heart and many tears,' were, if not technically and professedly, yet to all intents and purposes, Separatists also. I rejoice that the prelatical assumptions and tyrannies of that day were resisted. The Church of England would never have been the noble church it has since become, had there been no seasonable protest against its corruptions, its extravagant formalism, and its overbearing intolerance. . . .

Let those who will, indulge in the dream, or cherish the waking vision, of a single universal Church on earth, recognized and accepted of men, whose authority is binding on every conscience, and decisive of every point of faith or form. To the eye of God, indeed, such a church may be visible

even now, in 'the blessed company of all faithful people,' in whatever region they may dwell, with whatever organization they may be connected, with Him as their head 'of whom the whole family in earth and heaven is named.' And as, in some grand orchestra, hundreds of performers, each with his own instrument and his own separate score, strike widely variant notes, and produce sounds, sometimes in close succession and sometimes at lengthened intervals, which heard alone would seem to be wanting in everything like method or melody, but which heard together are found delighting the ear, and ravishing the soul, with a flood of magnificent harmony, as they give concerted expression to the glowing conceptions of some mighty master, — even so, it may be, from the differing, broken, and often seemingly discordant strains of sincere seekers after God, the Divine ear, upon which no lisp of the voice or breathing of the heart is lost, catches only a combined and glorious anthem of prayer and praise. But to human ears such harmonies are not vouchsafed. The Church, in all its majestic unity, shall be revealed hereafter. The 'Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, is above;' and we can only hope that, in the providence of God, its gates shall be wider, and its courts fuller, and its members quickened and multiplied, by the very differences of form and of doctrine which have divided Christians from each other on earth, and which have created something of competition and rivalry, and even of contention, in their efforts to advance the ends of their respective denominations. Absolute religious uniformity, as poor human nature is now constituted, would but too certainly be the cause, if it were not itself the consequence, of absolute religious indifference and stagnation.

In August, 1871, he and Ralph Waldo Emerson were the principal speakers at a celebration by this Society of the centennial anniversary of the birthday of Walter Scott, and in the following summer he had a slight temporary relapse into politics. During the Presidential

canvass of 1868 he had been absent from home, but as the contest of 1872 approached he was one of those who hoped that Charles Francis Adams might head the opposition to the re-election of General Grant, as candidate of the combined Democracy and "Liberal Republicans." This candidacy, however, was secured by Horace Greeley, whom Mr. Winthrop considered a remarkable man in his way, but a thoroughly unsafe politician, to whose kite was appended an even more objectionable tail, in the person of Gratz Brown of Missouri. He accordingly decided, as a choice of evils, to vote for Grant, of whom he had latterly seen a good deal in connection with the Peabody Trust, and for whom he had a personal liking. When this intention became bruited, he was urged to make a speech, or at least some public declaration of his views, which he declined to do, but consented to have published the following passage in a letter to Governor Clifford:

[Aug. 8, 1872.] When I accepted the chairmanship of the Southern Education Trustees, I resolved to keep out of politics. If Mr. Adams had been nominated, I should have been seriously tempted to reconsider my resolution. As it is, I shall adhere to it firmly, except so far as giving my vote to General Grant. You and I will thus vote alike again, as we did in good old Whig times, and as we have not always done since. I certainly cannot support Greeley and the Coalition. I can see no safety for the country in their success. Neither reform nor reconciliation could result from so unnatural a combination, but only renewed discord and confusion.

His intention for the first time to vote the Republican ticket in a general election excited a good deal of remark; but the Greeley press ingeniously endeavored

to ascribe a personal motive to it, and gave wide circulation to the following squib: —

"Robert C. Winthrop cannot bear to be on the same side with Charles Sumner, and so has come out for Grant."

[Brookline, Aug. 16, 1872.] I send you a slip from a Charleston paper, received yesterday from one of my South Carolina cousins. Was there ever greater rascality than seems to have been practised there? Can any one wonder that our friend Aiken and all the rest are ready for any change? Yet I do not see how Grant and his Administration are involved in the responsibility. It is the first fruit, I presume, of unrestricted suffrage, black and white, which brought into office incompetent and unprincipled men. And for this, certainly, Sumner and Greeley are quite as much responsible as anybody else. Indeed, I am inclined to think that their departure from among the supporters of the Administration may fairly be considered a not inconsiderable step towards its purification. I am not, however, disposed to join in the hue and cry against Sumner just now, because I think the violence of his philippic against Grant has defeated its purpose. Vituperation has become a second nature to him, if it were not original depravity, and we must all make allowance for a temperament which he may have been unable to resist. He sometimes reminds me of Pope's lines: —

> 'Railing and praising were his usual themes,
> And both (to show his judgment) in extremes.
> So over-violent, or over-civil,
> That every man with him was God or Devil.'

The canvass, thus far, strikes me as the most disgusting one in American history. Greeley travels about in his white coat, like the *Candidate* in the worst of old Roman days, soliciting votes for himself and playing humble to the multitude, in a style never before exhibited by a Presidential aspirant. It is loathsome beyond expression to any one who respects or loves his country.

[Aug. 21.] A report has reached me that there is a purpose in some quarters to put my name on the Grant electoral ticket. I cannot think such an idea can be seriously entertained, but it is quite out of the question. As between Grant and Greeley, I go for Grant, and that heartily, but it must be clearly understood that I do so as an Independent Conservative voter. . . . I see in a New York paper that 'a scholar of established reputation and high moral character' has written from Cambridge to 'one of the most distinguished men of the country' charging that Grant was so drunk at Commencement 'as to excite a general feeling of anxiety and disgust.' It would be curious to ascertain the name of this scholar of established reputation and high moral character. You and Grant were more fortunate than I, if you got anything stronger than water at the Commencement dinner. The author of this shameful libel must have mistaken Gratz Brown at Yale for Grant at Harvard!

[Sept. 2.] Who do you think called here lately? Sumner himself, — a rare shadow on my threshold. He was very agreeable, as he always can be when he chooses, but we eschewed politics, though, but for the presence of another visitor, I should have enjoyed an interchange of views. . . . The Female Suffrage Resolution at the Republican Convention was ridiculous, and our friend Wilson is making a bad figure on the Know-Nothing business. But I shut my eyes to everything but the humiliation of having Greeley for President, and I rejoice that such a prospect is growing 'small by degrees, and beautifully less.'

[Oct. 29.] I earnestly hope, as you do, that the triumph which will be achieved next week will embolden the President to bring some men around him for the next four years, in whom we shall all have confidence, and if you should prove to be one of them, it would give me a great deal of pleasure. I greatly fear, however, that the Butler-Loring interest will prevail in Massachusetts, and that nothing will be suffered to interfere with their prospects. Be this as it may, I, for

one, have no disposition to re-enter the political circle. Besides your kind suggestion, Wilson has been dropping hints about my consenting to let my name be considered for a foreign mission, intimating that Grant would be entirely willing to make such an appointment if he (Wilson) could get it through the Senate, which he thinks he can, *et cetera*. I positively refused. I do not wish to be drawn into the position of indorsing the Republican party, nor would anything of the sort tempt me nowadays. If I go abroad again, as I dare say I shall, I prefer that it should be in the quiet way I have several times gone before. I have gradually accumulated so many friends in foreign countries that things are made very pleasant for me out there, and I should not fancy being tethered to a round of official duties. Wilson's obvious object is to strengthen Grant's second administration in the public mind, but I think he means kindly by me and I am not insensible to his soft speeches. No man did as much as he to arrest my Senatorial career twenty-two years ago, and we have exchanged some hard knocks since; but in spite of all this I have acquired a sort of liking for him. It is certainly remarkable that he should have attained the position he has without the slightest early advantages. I hope you managed to hear some of Tyndall's delightful lectures. He came out here to lunch and I had Agassiz to meet him. I found him an intelligent and agreeable fellow, and I am not without hope he may one day change his notions about religion.

In February, 1873, at the dedication of the new Town Hall at Brookline, he delivered by request an address of considerable length and much local interest upon the Environs of Boston. In March he spoke in honor of his predecessor in the Presidency of this Society, his friend and his father's friend, James Savage. A little later in the same year, he unsuccessfully

endeavored to procure the election of his friend, Alexander H. Vinton, to the vacant bishopric of Massachusetts, contributing to the literature of that contest a noticeable letter, signed "W." in the "Daily Advertiser" of March 13, 1873. Besides serving on the Standing Committee of the diocese and as Chairman of its "Trustees of Donations," he had been actively connected with the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, from its foundation in 1867. In the spring of 1873, a wealthy layman offered the much-needed addition of $100,000 to the funds of that institution on condition that it should thenceforth be controlled by High Churchmen. The published answer of the board of government, declining this proposal, was written by Mr. Winthrop, and it was one upon the tone and arguments of which he somewhat prided himself.[1] In December of the same year he spoke in Faneuil Hall at the centennial celebration of the "Boston Tea-party," and on the 12th of March, 1874, it became his official duty to announce in fitting terms to this Society at its monthly meeting the loss of one of its honorary members, Millard Fillmore, and of one of its nominally resident-members, Charles Sumner, whose death he had only learned the same morning.

It is [said he] an event too solemn and too impressive to be the subject of any off-hand utterances. Yet, assembled here as we are to-day, with so striking an event uppermost in all our thoughts, it cannot be passed over in silence, certainly not by me. To us, as a society, Mr. Sumner was, indeed, but little, his name having been added to our resi-

[1] A Statement by the Trustees of the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Mass. John Wilson and Son, 1873.

dent-roll only within a few months past, and it never having been convenient to him to be present at even one of our meetings. We had all sincerely hoped, however, that in some future interval between the sessions of Congress, in some breathing-time from his arduous and assiduous public labors, we might have enjoyed the benefit of his large acquaintance with historical subjects, and of the rich accomplishments by which he was distinguished. That hope is now suddenly brought to an end, and we have only the satisfaction of knowing that his election, as one of our restricted number, afforded him a moment's gratification in what have so unexpectedly proved to be the last few months of his life.

In the Senate of the United States, in which for more than three terms he has been so prominent and conspicuous a member, the gap created by his death cannot easily be measured. There, for so many years, he has been one of the observed of all observers. There, for so many years, scarce a word or an act of his has failed to be the subject of widespread attention and comment. No name has been oftener in the columns of the daily press, or on the lips of the people in all parts of the country, — sometimes for criticism, and even for censure, but far more generally for commendation and applause. Such a name, certainly, cannot pass from the rolls of living men without leaving a large void to many eyes and to many hearts.

One of the pioneers in the cause of antislavery, while yet in private life, he breasted the billows of that raging controversy with unsparing energy, until the struggle ceased with the institution which had given rise to it. The same untiring energy was then transferred to what he regarded as the rights of the race which had been emancipated. Indeed, everything which could be associated with the idea of human rights was made the subject of his ardent advocacy, according to his own judgment and convictions. Devoting himself early, also, to the cause of peace, and making the relations of the United States with other nations a matter for special

study, his unwearied labors as Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs for several years, and his acknowledged familiarity with international law, can never be undervalued or forgotten.

As a writer, a lecturer, a debater, and an orator, he had acquired the strongest hold on public attention everywhere, both at home and abroad; and few scholars have brought to the illustration of their topics, whether political or literary, the fruits of greater research. His orations and speeches, of which a new edition, revised by his own hand, is understood to be approaching a completion, cannot fail to be a rich storehouse of classical and historical lore, and will certainly furnish a most valuable series of pictures, from his own point of view, of the stirring scenes to which they relate.

The tidings of his death have come upon us with too painful a surprise to allow of our dwelling at length on his crowded and eventful public career. For myself, I need hardly say that any detailed discussion of his course might involve peculiar elements of delicacy and difficulty; as it has been my fortune, or as others may think, my misfortune, to differ from him so often and so widely, — sometimes as to conclusions and ends, but far more frequently as to the means of reaching those conclusions and of advancing those ends. I am glad to remember, however, that everything of personal alienation and estrangement had long ago ceased between us, and that no one has been more ready than myself, for many years past, to welcome him into this Society. His praises will be abundantly and far more fitly spoken elsewhere, by some of the friends to whom he was so dear, and you will all pardon me, I know, if the suddenness of the announcement has prevented me from paying a more adequate tribute to his culture, his accomplishments, his virtues, and to those commanding qualities by which he impressed himself on the period in which he lived.

These remarks appeared in a Boston paper of the

same evening, and the next morning he received the following note: —

AMESBURY, 12 3mo, 1874.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — As a lifelong friend of Charles Sumner, I cannot resist the desire to thank thee for thy generous and beautiful tribute to his memory before the Historical Society. I have read it with more satisfaction than any other notice of the sad event.

I may mention here that when I expressed to Mr. S. my regret that he had used some expressions in a letter to thee which I thought unwarranted, he assured me that he had the highest personal respect for thee, and only dissented from thy views on the question at issue. Believe me very truly,

Always thy friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

A few days later a friend showed him a private letter from our late associate, Peleg W. Chandler, containing the following passage: —

[March 15, 1874.] "It strikes me that of all the eulogies that have been pronounced upon Sumner, the remarks of Winthrop are quite superior. For dignity, manliness, and a certain simplicity, they are very marked. I well remember the time when there was great personal bitterness between them, and, though an intimate friend of Sumner, I thought that Winthrop had just cause for resentment. I was then on very intimate terms with Sumner, seeing him every day, but in the attempt to defeat Winthrop's re-election to Congress, I did all I could in behalf of the latter, although I hardly knew him personally. This contested election broke up a great harmony that had existed among the denizens of No. 4 Court Street, although my own personal relations with Sumner have always been pleasant. There are certain parts of his character which I think I knew as well as any man liv-

ing. He was a hard opponent, unsparing and even cruel. Knowing what I do know, it struck me that Winthrop's brief mention of the dead Senator was very fine. It revealed to me an elevated plane in his own character, of which I was not before aware. There is one thing that must be said of Winthrop as well as of Sumner. The latter, I know, was very sensitive to the criticisms of the newspapers, and even to the stabs that were evidently malicious and false. The same is true, I fancy, in regard to the former; but I never could see that either of them swerved a hair's breadth from what they conceived to be right, on account of such criticisms."

[March 17.] I had [wrote Mr. Winthrop] so little time to think over what it would be fitting to me to say of Sumner that I had some misgivings as to the effect I should produce. My views of his political course are so well known that I did not wish to appear insincere by praising him too much, nor, on the other hand, to have it said that our old antagonism had resulted in my saying too little. I seem to have hit a golden mean, as I have had cordial letters of thanks from Whittier and other friends of his, while the newspapers have been very complimentary, particularly the New York 'Tribune' of yesterday, a quarter in which, as you know, I am not accustomed to look for commendation. At the Faneuil Hall meeting, Joshua B. Smith, the colored caterer, paid a touching tribute to Sumner which was really the gem of the occasion. As I sat, by invitation, on the platform, wedged in between William Lloyd Garrison and Henry Wilson, a certain sense of the ludicrous came over me, — we seemed such a queer *trio*. In the conversation we had together, before the exercises began, my distinguished neighbors were by no means indisposed to qualify their admiration of the departed, but as I was yesterday one of his pall-bearers, I think it hardly becoming to repeat what was said.

[March 29.] I sometimes question whether the cause of religion is advanced when clergymen, from a pulpit on a

Sunday, single out for especial admiration statesmen in no way identified with religious observances; and I have been led into this train of thought by the fact that my own rector, in the course of a fine sermon this morning, took occasion to pay a brief but glowing tribute to Sumner, who, according to Henry Wilson, had not been inside of a church for twelve years past, unless to attend a wedding or a funeral. He spoke of him, moreover, as one who was 'a friend to freedom when others were its enemies,' and as 'hating slavery when others loved it.' Precisely what was meant by this allusion to 'others' is not quite clear, but it was interpreted by some of the congregation as referring to the party with which Sumner was originally associated. If so, I do not think it fair. The great Whig party loved freedom and hated slavery as much as he, though they could not adopt his mode of showing their love and hate. It is a perversion of historical truth to stigmatize that party as having been, in any sense, a proslavery party. Even the great leader of the Southern Whigs, Henry Clay, can never be so designated without the most reckless disregard of his career and character. We did what we could to keep the peace between North and South, hoping that a day would one day be opened, in the good providence of God, for gradual emancipation on some basis which would be safe for both blacks and whites. Emancipation came as a necessity of the Civil War which we had sought to avert. Perhaps it could have come in no other way, but we had always looked to the ultimate disappearance of slavery under the influences of civilization and Christianity, without endangering the Union or sacrificing half a million of lives. No one will deny or doubt, I think, that if domestic slavery could have been extinguished in the United States by a great voluntary act of emancipation and philanthropy, it would have had a grandeur and a glory which can never attach to its forcible extinction as an act of war.

Early in May Mr. Winthrop went to Europe, intending to return before the end of the year; but the health of two members of his family rendered this undesirable, and he did not reach home until the autumn of 1875. Among the pleasant incidents of this, his fourth sojourn in foreign countries, was the bestowal upon him of the degree of doctor of laws at the Cambridge Commencement of June, 1874, — a degree many years before awarded him by various institutions of learning, but which he was gratified now to receive from a famous English University, with which, in the remote past, some members of his family had been associated.[1] His stay abroad resulted in his being obliged to decline an invitation from the town of Lexington to deliver the oration at its centennial celebration of the 19th of April, 1775, and an invitation from the Bunker Hill Monument Association to perform a similar duty at the centennial celebration of the battle of Bunker Hill. He was able to accept, however, an invitation from the city of Boston to be the orator of the day at its centennial celebration of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1876.[2] This occasion gave rise to a formidable array of patriotic addresses throughout the country; and an examination of the leading newspapers of that period shows that what were considered the three principal ones were those delivered by William

[1] His third volume of Addresses contains the remarks made by him at the Vice-Chancellor's banquet on this occasion, and in the thirteenth volume of the first series of this Society's Proceedings will be found a number of letters, or parts of letters, written by him during this absence to his friend Charles Deane.

[2] It happened that, although repeatedly invited, he had never before delivered a "Fourth of July oration," but he had always said that, if alive and well in 1876, he should be glad to do so in Boston.

M. Evarts in Philadelphia, by Charles Francis Adams in Taunton, and by Mr. Winthrop in Boston. Setting aside any notices which might be thought to have been in some degree due to local pride or personal friendship, the popular verdict would appear to have been that the last-named production, though the longest, excelled the others in a certain breeziness, so to speak, and in the sustained interest imparted to a hackneyed subject. I quote only a few closing paragraphs: —

Our fathers were no propagandists of republican institutions in the abstract. Their own adoption of the republican form was, at the moment, almost as much a matter of chance as of choice, of necessity as of preference. The Thirteen Colonies had, happily, been too long accustomed to manage their own affairs, and were too wisely jealous of each other, also, to admit for an instant any idea of centralization; and without centralization a monarchy, or any other form of arbitrary government, was out of the question. Union was then, as it is now, the only safety for liberty; but it could be only a Constitutional Union, a limited and restricted Union, founded on compromises and mutual concessions; a Union recognizing a large measure of State rights, — resting not only on the division of powers among legislative and executive departments, but resting also on the distribution of powers between the States and the Nation, both deriving their original authority from the people, and exercising that authority for the people. This was the system contemplated by the Declaration of 1776. This was the system approximated to by the Confederation of 1778–81. This was the system finally consummated by the Constitution of 1787. And under this system our great example of self-government has been held up before the nations, fulfilling, so far as it has fulfilled it, that lofty mission which is recognized to-day as 'Liberty enlightening the World.'

Let me not speak of that example in any vainglorious spirit.

Let me not seem to arrogate for my country anything of superior wisdom or virtue. Who will pretend that we have always made the most of our independence, or the best of our liberty? Who will maintain that we have always exhibited the brightest side of our institutions, or always intrusted their administration to the wisest or worthiest men? Who will deny that we have sometimes taught the world what to avoid, as well as what to imitate; and that the cause of freedom and reform has sometimes been discouraged and put back by our shortcomings, or by our excesses? Our Light has been, at best, but a Revolving Light; warning by its darker intervals or its sombre shades, as well as cheering by its flashes of brilliancy, or by the clear lustre of its steadier shining. Yet, in spite of all its imperfections and irregularities, to no other earthly light have so many eyes been turned; from no other earthly illumination have so many hearts drawn hope and courage. It has breasted the tides of sectional and of party strife. It has stood the shock of foreign and of civil war. It will still hold on, erect and unextinguished, defying the 'returning wave' of demoralization and corruption. Millions of young hearts, in all quarters of our land, are awaking at this moment to the responsibility which rests peculiarly upon them, for rendering its radiance purer and brighter and more constant. Millions of young hearts are resolving, at this hour, that it shall not be their fault if it do not stand for a century to come, as it has stood for a century past, a Beacon of Liberty to mankind! . . .

We come then, to-day, with hearts full of gratitude to God and man, to pass down our country and its institutions, — not wholly without scars and blemishes upon their front, — not without shadows on the past or clouds on the future, — but freed forever from at least one great stain, and firmly rooted in the love and loyalty of a United People, — to the generations which are to succeed us. And what shall we say to those succeeding generations, as we commit the sacred trust to their keeping and guardianship?

If I could hope, without presumption, that any humble

counsels of mine, on this hallowed anniversary, could be remembered beyond the hour of their utterance, and reach the ears of my countrymen in future days; if I could borrow 'the masterly pen' of Jefferson, and produce words which should partake of the immortality of those which he wrote on this little desk;[1] if I could command the matchless tongue of John Adams, when he poured out appeals and arguments which moved men from their seats, and settled the destinies of a nation; if I could catch but a single spark of those electric fires which Franklin wrested from the skies, and flash down a phrase, a word, a thought, along the magic chords which stretch across the ocean of the future, — what could I, what would I, say?

I could not omit, certainly, to reiterate the solemn obligations which rest on every citizen of this republic to cherish and enforce the great principles of our Colonial and Revolutionary fathers, — the principles of Liberty and Law, one and inseparable, — the principles of the Constitution and the Union.

I could not omit to urge on every man to remember that self-government politically can only be successful, if it be accompanied by self-government personally; that there must be government somewhere; and that if the people are indeed to be sovereigns, they must exercise their sovereignty over themselves individually, as well as over themselves in the aggregate, — regulating their own lives, resisting their own temptations, subduing their own passions, and voluntarily imposing upon themselves some measure of that restraint and discipline which, under other systems, is supplied from the

[1] On this occasion Mr. Winthrop had before him the writing-desk of Jefferson, the same on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence, — a desk subsequently presented to the United States by the children of Jefferson's granddaughter, Mrs. Joseph Coolidge of Boston. See the Proceedings of Congress for April 23, 1880, with speeches then made by Senators and Representatives from Massachusetts and Virginia, together with a letter from Mr. Winthrop on the subject.

armories of arbitrary power, — the discipline of virtue in the place of the discipline of slavery.

I could not omit to caution them against the corrupting influences of intemperance, extravagance, and luxury. I could not omit to warn them against political intrigue, as well as against personal licentiousness; and to implore them to regard principle and character, rather than mere party allegiance, in the choice of men to rule over them.

I could not omit to call upon them to foster and further the cause of universal education; to give a liberal support to our schools and colleges; to promote the advancement of science and art, in all their multiplied divisions and relations; and to encourage and sustain all those noble institutions of charity which, in our own land above all others, have given the crowning grace and glory to modern civilization.

I could not refrain from pressing upon them a just and generous consideration for the interests and the rights of their fellow-men everywhere, and an earnest effort to promote peace and good-will among the nations of the earth.

I could not refrain from reminding them of the shame, the unspeakable shame and ignominy, which would attach to those who should show themselves unable to uphold the glorious fabric of self-government which had been founded for them at such a cost by their fathers. '*Videte, videte, ne, ut illis pulcherimum fuit tantam vobis imperii gloriam relinquere, sic nobis turpissimum sit, illud quod accepistis, tueri et conservare non posse!*'

And surely, most surely, I could not fail to invoke them to imitate and emulate the examples of virtue and purity and patriotism which the great founders of our Colonies and of our Nation had so abundantly left them.

But could I stop there? Could I hold out to them, as the results of a long life of observation and experience, nothing but the principles and examples of great men?

Who and what are great men? 'Woe to the country,' said Metternich to Ticknor, forty years ago, 'whose condition and

institutions no longer produce great men to manage its affairs.' The Austrian statesman applied his remark to England at that day; but his woe — if it be a woe — would have a wider range in our time, and leave hardly any land unreached. Certainly we hear it nowadays, at every turn, that never before has there been so striking a disproportion between supply and demand, as at this moment, the world over, in the commodity of great men.

But who and what are great men? 'And now stand forth,' says an eminent Swiss historian, who had completed a survey of the whole history of mankind, at the very moment when, as he says, 'a blaze of freedom is just bursting forth beyond the ocean,' — 'and now stand forth, ye gigantic forms, shades of the first Chieftains, and Sons of Gods, who glimmer among the rocky halls and mountain fortresses of the ancient world; and you, Conquerors of the world from Babylon and from Macedonia; ye Dynasties of Cæsars, of Huns, Arabs, Moguls, and Tartars; ye Commanders of the Faithful on the Tigris, and Commanders of the Faithful on the Tiber; you hoary Counsellors of Kings and Peers of Sovereigns; Warriors on the car of Triumph, covered with scars and crowned with laurels; ye long rows of Consuls and Dictators, famed for your lofty minds, your unshaken constancy, your ungovernable spirit, — stand forth and let us survey for a while your assembly, like a Council of the Gods! What were ye? The first among mortals? Seldom can you claim that title! The best of men? Still fewer of you have deserved such praise! Were ye the compellers, the instigators of the human race, the prime movers of all their works? Rather let us say that you were the instruments, that you were the wheels by whose means the Invisible Being has conducted the incomprehensible fabric of universal government across the ocean of time!'

Instruments and wheels of the Invisible Governor of the Universe! This is indeed all which the greatest of men ever have been, or ever can be. No flatteries of courtiers,

no adulations of the multitude, no audacity of self-reliance, no intoxications of success, no evolutions or developments of science, — can make more or other of them. This is 'the sea-mark of their utmost sail,' — the goal of their farthest run, — the very round and top of their highest soaring.

Oh, if there could be to-day a deeper and more pervading impression of this great truth throughout our land, and a more pervading conformity of our thoughts and words and acts to the lessons which it involves, — if we could lift ourselves to a loftier sense of our relations to the Invisible, — if, in surveying our past history, we could catch larger and more exalted views of our destinies and our responsibilities, — if we could realize that the want of good men may be a heavier woe to a land than any want of what the world calls great men, — our Centennial Year would not only be signalized by splendid ceremonials and magnificent commemorations and gorgeous Expositions, but it would go far towards fulfilling something of the grandeur of that 'Acceptable Year' which was announced by higher than human lips, and would be the auspicious promise and pledge of a glorious second century of Independence and Freedom for our country.

For, if that second century of self-government is to go on safely to its close, or is to go on safely and prosperously at all, there must be some renewal of that old spirit of subordination and obedience to Divine as well as human laws, which has been our security in the past. There must be faith in something higher and better than ourselves. There must be a reverent acknowledgment of an Unseen, but All-seeing, All-controlling Ruler of the Universe. His Word, His Day, His House, His Worship, must be sacred to our children, as they have been to their fathers; and His blessing must never fail to be invoked upon our land and upon our liberties. The patriot voice, which cried from the balcony of yonder old State House, when the Declaration had been originally proclaimed, 'Stability and perpetuity to American Indepen-

dence,' did not fail to add, 'God save our American States.'[1] I would prolong that ancestral prayer. And the last phrase to pass my lips at this hour, and to take its chance for remembrance or oblivion in years to come, as the conclusion of this Centennial Oration, and the sum and summing up of all I can say to the present or the future, shall be: — There is, there can be, no Independence of God: In Him, as a Nation, no less than in Him, as individuals, 'we live, and move, and have our being.' GOD SAVE OUR AMERICAN STATES!

In the General Election of 1876 he took no part except to allow the publication of a short letter to Charles Francis Adams, which contained the following passage: —

At a moment when you are the subject of much severe and unjust animadversion, I am unwilling to let the election go by without saying to you formally what I said in casual conversation with you many weeks ago. I am for you and with you in all your views of the present condition of public affairs, and shall give my vote accordingly for yourself and Mr. Tilden.[2] I have a great regard for Governor Rice,

[1] The reference is to James Bowdoin, who, as President of the Council of Massachusetts, promulgated the Declaration of Independence in Boston.

[2] Mr. Adams was then actively supporting Tilden for the Presidency and had consented to run for Governor of Massachusetts against Alexander H. Rice, the Republican candidate. Bitter attacks had been made upon him, the President of Harvard University, among others, designating the opponents of the Republican party as "rebels and copperheads," while Mr. Blaine arraigned three generations of a historic family in a savage but entertaining indictment. According to him, not only had old John Adams, "the best of the three," ruined the Federalist party and then passed the latter part of his life in "querulous attempts to throw the responsibility on Hamilton;" but John Quincy Adams had completely wrecked the great party of Monroe, and would be chiefly remembered "as the author of a diary conspicuous for its malignity, and father of a son unwise enough to publish it." "No Adams," added Mr.

and entire confidence in the purity and patriotism of Mr. Hayes. But I hold with you, that the best hope, if not the only hope, of putting a stop to corruption at Washington, and of restoring peace and harmony at the South, is in a thorough change of the National Administration. I have no fear that such a change will endanger the great issues of the late war, much less that it will disturb our national credit at home or abroad. Such suggestions seem to me only the desperate resort of a party clinging to power. The whole idea that our elections are to turn on the probable price of American securities in foreign markets is humiliating.

Mr. Webster had then been in his grave four and twenty years, and the hostility of a few of his followers to Mr. Winthrop had long since become a thing of the past. A bronze statue of the former, the gift of a wealthy New York merchant, was about to be unveiled in Central Park by Mr. Evarts, who represented New York and the donor; while Mr. Winthrop, by common consent, went on to represent Boston and the associates of Webster. His short address on this occasion (Nov. 25, 1876), appreciative but discriminating, was considered worthy of the career and character of its great subject, and should be read in connection with a paper by the same author entitled "Webster's Reply to Hayne, and his General Methods of Preparation."[1]

Blaine, "ever headed a party without taking the life out of it. The Republican party can be beaten in 1876 and still have a future; but with Charles Francis Adams for a candidate, it would never have breathed again."

[1] The greater part of this paper was written in 1877, but a pressure of engagements caused it to be laid aside and it was not finished until the year before Mr. Winthrop died. It first appeared in "Scribner's Magazine" for January, 1894, where it attracted marked attention.

[Jan. 31, 1877.] Moody and Sankey are in full blast here, and I hope they will do good. We need revivals (in their best sense) everywhere. I wish I could have been a Wesley, or a Whitefield even, *sed non cuivis adire Corintho.* And if one begins to wish, why not wish to be a Paul outright! I only meant to imply the deep sense I have of the grandeur and glory of talents devoted to Evangelical work. It was one of my ambitions to compose a hymn worthy of a place in a church collection, but I never could satisfy myself. Watts, Cowper, and Wesley will live longer on the tongues of men by their hymns than Longfellow, Holmes, or Whittier by any of their productions. Such music used to have a special charm for me. I recall it at least sixty years ago when I was a school-boy, and when six or seven sisters and brothers used to gather around the piano, while my father and mother sat listening to such grand old tunes as Hotham and Denmark and Cheshunt. It was the 'Lock Hospital Collection' of tunes on which I was brought up, and our favorite hymns were 'Jesus, Lover of my soul,' 'Our Lord has risen from the dead,' and 'Before Jehovah's awful throne.' The memory of these and other hymns often comes over me on a Sunday night, and brings back a family group — of which I was the youngest, and am now the only survivor — as vividly as I hope one day to see it above.

[Newport, Aug. 24, 1877.] William Beach Lawrence told me to-day that Sumner told him, in 1872, that the Coalition should have nominated him (Sumner) for President instead of Greeley, and that he could have carried the election! I have some doubt about the entire accuracy of this, as Lawrence does not seem to me the sort of person in whom Sumner would have been likely to confide freely. This reminds me of a long talk I had with Thurlow Weed in New York last May, when, in reviewing the past, he told me some queer things about different people, some of which I should hardly care to repeat. He added that Evarts had told him that Hayes would have liked to offer me the mission to England, but that my

published letter to Mr. Adams made this out of the question. I have nothing to regret in that letter, nor could I, in any case, have accepted the post, as my health is altogether too uncertain and unsatisfactory. I manage to get through a good deal of work, and can pull myself together for a great occasion, but I feel wretchedly much of the time, and have had some warnings which make me think I am not long for this world. Aside from this, I prefer that the high opinion I have formed of President Hayes should seem unbiassed by any personal considerations.

Among his utterances of this and the following year may be alluded to in passing a speech when presiding at the Festival of the Boston Latin School (Nov. 15, 1877), another at the Harvard Alumni dinner of June 26, 1878, the fiftieth anniversary of his own class, — when he was accompanied by his kinsman, Lord Dufferin, then Governor-General of Canada, who was on a visit to him at Brookline, — and a third at the Salem celebration of Sept. 18, 1878, when Dean Stanley was his guest. Among the many invitations which from time to time he had been compelled to decline, was one to deliver the address at the unveiling of the statue of Henry Clay, at Louisville, in the spring of 1867. He had always regretted having been unable to do this, and in 1879 he willingly complied with a request from the New England Historic Genealogical Society to prepare a memoir of Clay for the first volume of their "Memorial Biographies." This memoir, which was separately printed in pamphlet form, is also to be found in his own fourth volume, and has probably been as much read and as much praised as anything he ever wrote, though it does not pretend to be more than a compre-

hensive sketch of a very remarkable career. In October of the same year he retired from Presidency of the Boston Provident Association after twenty-five years' service, during which, to use the recorded language of our lamented associate, Hon. Francis E. Parker: —

"Mr. Winthrop has been the head of this Association, not in name only, but in fact. He brought to us not only the respect due to eminent national services and an honored name, but the power of organization and skill in administration which were natural to his character, and had been matured by experience of weighty and conspicuous public affairs. His constant and punctual presence at our meetings has added both despatch and dignity to the transaction of our business. His name has brought to us the most important of the legacies which we have received; and it is within bounds to say that, for the generous endowment of our Association, including the large reversionary interest in Mr. Eastburn's estate, we are as much indebted to him as if it had been his direct gift. It is to his influence and exertion, more than to any one cause, that the public owes the ample and commodious building which, as a general Bureau of Charity, now shelters many of the principal Associations of Boston. As the first Chairman of the Overseers of the Poor, under the new organization, he did more than any other person to shape that important charity, and to bring it into harmony with our own." [1]

[Washington, April 25, 1880.] My annual visit to the capital is always pleasant. People are very kind, and grow more and more to regard me as a sort of link with the past. I sat some time yesterday with Alexander H. Stephens, at the National Hotel, in the room in which Clay died, and in which Stephens says he expects to die ere long. He is feeble, but

[1] Annual Report of the Boston Provident Association, October, 1879, which also contains a warm tribute to Mr. Winthrop's services from the Senior Vice-President of the Association, another valued member of this Society, the late Rev. Dr. Samuel Kirkland Lothrop.

impulsive as ever, telling me, among other things, that when he recently urged Hancock for the Presidency, he was told the latter had not *money enough*, and that he now thought he should go for Grant! Money or not, I certainly prefer Hancock to Tilden, all things considered. Mrs. President Hayes has driven me to Rock Creek Church, which I had never seen before. It was built in 1719, repaired in 1775, and had quite a look of Old England. The sexton, a character in his way, informed me that before entering on his present functions he had been successively in the service of Dr. Pusey, George Grote, and Fanny Ellsler, a curious juxtaposition of celebrities. What you say of parts of J. Q. A.'s diary is substantially true. He undoubtedly kept gall and wormwood in his inkstand for daily use, but he was a charming old man all the same. He fulfilled the character which he gave to Roger Williams, — 'that conscientious, contentious man.' It is a great gratification to me to have procured the restoration and proper care of Ary Scheffer's Lafayette in the Capitol. General Garfield has been most obliging in the matter. This portrait, and the one of John Hampden in the White House, ought never to have been allowed to reach such a stage of neglect as that in which I have successively found them. Another great satisfaction to me has been in co-operating with others to secure the erection of some sort of monument to our old friend Joe Gales.[1]

A characteristic instance of Mr. Winthrop's readiness, at the age of more than threescore and ten, was exhibited in the following month, at the centennial celebration of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in the Old South Church, Boston, May 26, 1880, when the appointed orator was Charles Francis Adams, who was taken ill the day before, and whose manu-

[1] Joseph Gales, for nearly half a century editor of the "National Intelligencer," and a great favorite of all the prominent men of the Whig party, had died in Washington in 1860.

script could not be found. As invited guests had arrived from different parts of the country, and even from Europe, an appeal was made to Mr. Winthrop to come to the rescue, and though he had less than twenty-four hours' notice, he managed to prepare an instructive and commemorative address, forty minutes long, besides presiding at the banquet and introducing the speakers.

[July 24, 1880.] I to-day mailed Justin Winsor my promised chapter for his 'Memorial History of Boston.' It is not what I would but what I could, having been written under all sorts of distractions and adverse influences. Intended to be a sketch of the early history of Massachusetts, I should rather call it a skeleton; but, such as it is, it has been a labor of love and may answer its purpose. I have begun a paper on the relations of the Massachusetts Puritans to the Church of England, which I hope some day to read to the Historical Society.

Two months later he wrote for publication to the editor of the Boston "Post," as follows: —

[Brookline, Sept. 30, 1880.] I am sorry to see my name at the head of the list of Vice-Presidents of the Democratic meeting last night. I am duly sensible of the compliment, but it was without my consent. For many years past I have been altogether an independent voter. During this period I have repeatedly supported Democratic candidates, and I am quite likely to do so again; but I have sometimes voted the Republican ticket, and prefer to remain unconnected with any party organization.

I have, however, nothing to conceal, and this occasion obliges me to say frankly that I am opposed to-day, as I always have been, to any concerted array of solid Norths against solid Souths. These sectional antagonisms and contentions are worthy of all reprobation; and never more so than when

fomented and kept alive, on the one side or on the other, for the purpose of prolonging party power. They brought on the war; and they still interfere with the best fruits of peace. The condition of the freedmen themselves — their prospects of education and their secure enjoyment of all the privileges of citizenship — would, in my judgment, be far more hopeful if the pressure of a solid North were taken off from the Southern States, and if they could cease to feel, whether reasonably or unreasonably, that they were under the dominion of conquerors. This is the great consideration which weighs on my own mind, in view of the coming election, and which will control my vote. It is not a question of candidates or persons. It is not a question of parties or platforms. It is not a question whether the decision of the Electoral Commission, four years ago, was just or unjust. Nor is it, with me, any question as to the administration of President Hayes, which has been so generally acceptable. But my vote will be influenced solely by the desire to help in breaking up the intense sectionalism which has so long prevailed in our land. I long to see the Southern people once more divided into parties, as they were when I was in active public life, — not by caste, or color, or sympathy with a lost cause, but according to their honest judgment of what is best for the whole country. But the North must concur, and even lead the way in this patriotic obliteration of sectional prejudices, or it will fail to be accomplished. Let me only add, that I am not one of those who foresee dangers to our institutions, or to the general prosperity of the country, in the success of the Democratic party. Nor, in view of the great uncertainties of the result, does it seem wise to create a panic in advance by exaggerated partisan predictions. In my opinion, there has never been a moment since the war ended when it would have been safer to intrust the government to such a man as General Hancock, with the assurance that it would be administered upon principles as broad as the Constitution and as comprehensive as the Union.

[Nov. 17, 1880.] I took no very active part in the recent General Convention of our Church in New York. Since Dr. Barnas Sears's death a large burden of the business of the Peabody Trust has fallen upon me and engrossed much of my time. I think I may say without vanity that Southern schools owe me much. I shall let Dr. Holmes see what you think of him. His vivacity, in the derivative, as well as in every other sense, is marvellous, and his style, as you say, often quite exquisite. I have a notion that no one can reach the finest harmonies of style who has not a musical ear. Prescott had no music. Ticknor had little or none, Webster very little, and Everett none at all. Holmes has an abundance of time and tune, and I trace them in his composition. For myself, — if I may cite myself in connection with style, — I have almost too much ear for music. I often find myself stopping my pen to catch the true metre, and I am conscious that music enters largely into my literary efforts. Indeed, I have frequently brought out a sentence, or a paragraph, or a page or more, to a satisfactory conclusion and climax, — after it has eluded me for a long time, — under the inspiration of one of Beethoven's symphonies, or one of Mozart's *sonatas*, or one of Handel's choruses. Your views and my own of Carlyle and Emerson do not differ much. I doubt whether the former is an accurate historian, and I do not always get an intelligent idea of the latter's drift. His essay on Plato, for instance, which I have been lately reading, contains some splendid *nebulæ*, but I yearn for more condensed thought. Yet he is a most amiable and lovable person, who now and then writes very striking things, both in poetry and prose. No two men could be more unlike than he and Carlyle, — agreeing in little except their admiration for each other, — the one a bear, and the other a lamb, in outward demeanor. . . . As to 'Endymion,' there are clever things in it, as in all Disraeli's novels. He is certainly a very remarkable man, and I, for one, do not think the worse of him as a statesman because he happens to be the self-made son of a Jewish man

of letters. Dean Stanley once told me he had read 'Tancred' over and over again on account of its admirable description of the Holy Land.

[Feb. 13, 1881.] The quotation you allude to is from Matthew xiii. 43. There is nothing more exquisite in Holy Writ. Following as it does upon some of the most fearful images of future punishment, it gathers fresh beauty from the contrast and is like a strain of celestial harmony after the most harrowing discords. As the language of Christ himself, succeeded by that emphatic warning, 'he that hath ears to hear let him hear,' — it cannot be accepted as any mere figure of speech. Indeed, I know of nothing in the Bible more solemn than the passages which immediately precede it. In my opinion the tendency of modern preaching is far too much in the direction of explaining away the solemnities of future judgment. We are soothingly told that all these accounts of the punishment of the wicked are figurative, and a sort of sentimental, intellectual remorse is held out as the worst that can befall a sinner hereafter. Yet these tremendous verses contain — not a parable — but the declaration and unfolding of a parable, and that by 'Him that spake as never man spake.' I have often thought that those clergymen take a fearful responsibility, who so often bid us discard all thought about rewards and punishments as the basis of goodness, and who virtually declare that in dealing so often with these appeals to hope and fear, and in holding up so frequently these representations of future weal and woe, the Saviour himself was not an example to be followed. If old-fashioned Orthodox preachers 'dealt damnation round the land' somewhat too coarsely and indiscriminately, the modern pulpit-orators are at least guilty of the opposite extreme when they strive so hard to explain away everything which might be offensive to ears polite. . . . The reported conduct of —— is shocking and lamentable, but every day brings its revelations of human frailty and wickedness, and I suppose it will be so to the end. What hope, indeed, is there

of anything better, when in so many quarters table-tippings and 'spiritual' rappings seem to have taken the place of the Lord's Supper and a belief in the Holy Ghost? The idea that, after this fitful fever is ended, we may be summoned back to gossip about nothing at the beck and call of impertinent worldlings! Is this the fulfilment of the declaration that 'the Spirit shall return to God who gave it,' and how directly is it at war with the Scripture account of Dives, who begged in vain that he might be allowed to warn his brethren! I had rather take my chance of understanding the secrets of the other world by reading one verse of the New Testament in a prayerful spirit, than by consulting all the *mediums* that have 'boasted themselves to be somebody,' from Swedenborg downwards. . . . Your allusion to Paley's sermon on the recognition of friends in another world, reminds me that it was the favorite sermon of my mother, to whom I read it on her death-bed in 1825. How many friends there will be to be recognized! *Omnes eodem cogimur.* Paley, like Jeremy Taylor, is out of fashion, but, to my mind, some of his short, simple discourses are worth scores of what are called great sermons nowadays.

XII.

At the close of 1880 Mr. Winthrop had been complimented by an invitation from both branches of Congress to be the orator of the day at Yorktown in Virginia, Oct. 19, 1881, at a celebration by the Government of the United States of the hundredth anniversary of the Surrender of Cornwallis, when an official deputation from France, and other foreign guests, were expected. He accepted this appointment with some misgivings, lest, at his age, he should fail to be heard in the open air by a concourse of people; but he was encouraged by the great success he met with six months later, in delivering on

Bunker Hill, June 17, 1881, a commemorative address at the unveiling of the statue of Colonel William Prescott. Making all proper allowance for our national tendency to exaggeration and jubilation, there can be no doubt that this Yorktown celebration was, in its principal features, a great success, and Mr. Winthrop's oration was characterized by the best critics not merely as a masterpiece of historical portraiture, but as conceived in the kindest spirit towards Great Britain.[1] In the little volume of tributes to him by members of this Society, our late associate, Hamilton A. Hill, has given a graphic description of the scene, while the well-known English correspondent, Archibald Forbes, who had never met Mr. Winthrop before, wrote appreciatively of his "strong, clear, sustained, and sympathetic voice," his "fine, nervous face," and "the absorbed attention in which he held his hearers." I quote a single passage: —

It was strikingly said by a great moral and religious writer of the mother country in the last century, in relation to his own land, that 'between the period of national honor and complete degeneracy there is usually an interval of national vanity, during which examples of virtue are recounted and admired, without being imitated.' Let us beware lest we should be approaching such an interval in our own history! No one will deny that there is enough of recounting the great examples of virtue and valor and patriotism which have been left us by our fathers. Voices of admiration and eulogy

[1] Its length may surprise some readers, but it was his custom, in the discharge of such duties, to omit parts in delivery. Before making a political speech he thought over what he wished to say, relied much on the inspiration of the moment, writing it out afterward for publication, if he had time. In his commemorative addresses he pursued an opposite course, preparing his material carefully in advance, using in delivery as much as seemed desirable, but printing the whole.

resound throughout the land. Statues and monuments and obelisks are rising at every corner. There can hardly be too many of them. But vice and crime, speculation and embezzlement, corruption, profligacy, — and even assassination, alas! — stalk our streets and stare up at such memorials unrebuked and unabashed. And are there not symptoms of malarias, in some of our high places, more pestilent than any that ever emanated from Potomac or even Pontine marshes, infecting our whole civil service, and tainting the very life-blood of the nation? Let me not exaggerate our dangers, or dash the full joy of this anniversary by suggesting too strongly that there may be poison in our cup. But I must be pardoned, as one of a past generation, for dealing with old-fashioned counsels in old-fashioned phrases. Profound dissertations on the nature of government, metaphysical speculations on the true theory of civil liberty, scientific dissections of the machinery of our own political system — even were I capable of them — would be as inappropriate as they would be worthless. Our reliance for the preservation of Republican liberty can only be on the common-place principles, and common-place maxims, which lie within the comprehension of the children in our schools, or of the simplest and least cultured man or woman who wields a hammer or who plies a needle. The fear of the Lord must still and ever be the beginning of our wisdom, and obedience to His commandments the rule of our lives. Crime must not go unpunished, and vice must be stigmatized and rebuked as vice. Human life must be held sacred, and lawless violence and bloodshed cease to be regarded as a redress or remedy for anything. It is not by murdering Emperors or Presidents that the welfare of mankind or the liberty of the people is to be promoted. Such acts ought to be as execrable in the sight of man as they are in the sight of God.[1] The rights of the

[1] The Emperor of Russia (Alexander II.) and the President of the United States (James A. Garfield) had both been assassinated in that year.

humblest, as well as of the highest, must be respected and enforced. Labor, in all its departments, must be justly remunerated and elevated, and the true dignity of labor recognized. The poor must be wisely visited and liberally cared for, so that mendicity shall not be tempted into mendacity, nor want exasperated into crime. The great duties of individual citizenship must be conscientiously discharged. Peace, order, and the good old virtues of honesty, charity, temperance and industry, must be cultivated and reverenced. Public opinion must be refined, purified, strengthened, and rendered prevailing and imperative, by the best thoughts and best words which the press, the platform, and the pulpit can pour forth. . . .

Tell me not that I am indulging in truisms. I know they are truisms; but they are better — a thousand fold better — than Nihilisms, or Communisms, or Fenianisms, or any of the other *isms* which are making such headway in supplanting them. No advanced thought, no mystical philosophy, no glittering abstractions, no swelling phrases about freedom, — not even science, with all its marvellous inventions and discoveries — can help us much in sustaining this Republic. Still less can any godless theories of Creation, or any infidel attempts to rule out the Redeemer from his rightful supremacy in our hearts, afford us any hope of security. That way lies despair. Commonplace truths, old familiar teachings, the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Farewell Address of Washington, honesty, virtue, patriotism, universal education, are what the world most needs in these days, and our own part of the world as much as any other part. Without these we are lost. With these, and with the blessing of God, which is sure to follow them, a second century of our Republic may be confidently looked forward to; and those who shall gather on this field, a hundred years hence, shall then exult, as we are now exulting, in the continued enjoyment of the free institutions bequeathed to us by

our fathers, and in honoring the memory of those who have sustained them![1]

It was not infrequently the ambition of fugitive slaves who had earned money at the North or elsewhere, to regularize their position by purchasing free papers of their owners, and to procure the manumission of their families. Such negotiations necessitated the deposit of funds in the hands of some one whose name inspired general confidence, and between 1840 and 1860 Mr. Winthrop, at some inconvenience, repeatedly consented to be the go-between, and when the case excited his sympathy, himself contributed, and obtained contributions from others, to the sum needed. The result was a friendly feeling towards him on the part of several prominent colored men in Boston and Washington, to whose agency, as he supposed, he owed an exemption from the personal attacks habitually made upon Conservative leaders at the political meetings of that race. He was therefore a good deal surprised, early in 1882, by an allusion to himself in the autobiography of Frederick Douglass, then first published. After drawing a noteworthy contrast between his first meeting Mr.

[1] Not the least agreeable, but certainly the most unexpected, of his Yorktown experiences was the subsequent action of one hundred and sixty leading citizens of Massachusetts, without distinction of party, in furnishing a portrait of him for the Speakers' Corridor in the Capitol at Washington. For the speeches made in the House of Representatives at this presentation (June 27, 1882), and for further references to him in the same place, at the presentation of portraits of other Massachusetts Speakers (Jan. 19, 1888), see the "Congressional Record." The artist was Daniel Huntington, who painted an earlier portrait of him, now in the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, as well as a later one for this Society, which also possesses a bust of him by Dexter, taken soon after his retirement from Congress. A more effective bust, by Powers (Florence, 1868), is in the Library at Harvard.

Winthrop, when waiting behind his chair at a dinner in 1838, soon after his escape from slavery, and their becoming personally acquainted when speakers at Faneuil Hall after the fall of Richmond, twenty-seven years later, — the author went on to say: —

"Regiment after regiment, brigade after brigade, had passed over Boston Common to endure the perils and hardships of war, and a word from Robert C. Winthrop would have gone far to nerve those young soldiers going forth to lay down their lives for the life of the Republic; but no word came until the last quarter of the eleventh hour, when the work was nearly done. The time when the Union needed him was when the slaveholding rebellion was raising a defiant head, not when that head was in the dust and ashes of defeat and destruction."

Having reason to suspect that the writer had been the unconscious instrument of the ill-will of persons with lighter skins than his own, and assuming that his residence in Washington might occasionally lead him to the Library of Congress, I invited him to run his eye over the table of contents of that one of Mr. Winthrop's volumes which deals with the period of the Civil War, and then let me know how far he considered himself justified in saying what he had. I soon after received a courteous expression of regret that he had been misled, a regret he forthwith repeated in the newspapers, adding an explanatory note to a second edition then going through the press.[1]

[1] In the subsequent London edition he changed the whole passage, substituting several compliments. I am particular to mention all this because I can recall no instance when any white assailant of Mr. Winthrop behaved even half so handsomely when a mistake of fact was pointed out to him.

During the greater part of 1882 Mr. Winthrop was again abroad, where he enjoyed himself as before, though keenly sensible of the gaps death had made in the circle of his foreign friends, missing particularly in London Sir Henry Holland, Archdeacon Sinclair, Lord Stanhope the historian, Dean Stanley, and the fourth Earl of St. Germans, — in Paris Thiers, from whom he had experienced much hospitality, and Circourt, with whom he had corresponded for more than thirty years.[1] Among the pleasant incidents of this, his last stay in Europe, were a few days passed at the historic Château of Rochambeau, where he found in his bedroom a portrait of Washington given by the latter to the famous marshal of that name, — a breakfast at Chantilly with the Duc d'Aumâle, who showed him many of the rarest of his art treasures, — and a renewal of former intercourse with Mignet, the venerable French historian, to whose memory, it may be remembered, he paid a finished tribute at a meeting of this Society in April, 1884. Meantime, Congress had taken in hand the completion of the National Monument to Washington, which, originally conceived on too vast a scale, had been suffered to stand unfinished in sight of the Capitol, through many years of delay and discouragement. On the 13th of May, 1884, a Resolution was approved by both Houses designating the 22d of February in the following year for its dedication with appropriate ceremonies, and naming Mr. Winthrop the orator of the day, an appointment he felt much hesitation in accepting, but

[1] Count Adolphe de Circourt, one of the most accomplished scholars of his time, for some account of whom see the seventeenth volume of the "Proceedings" of this Society, of which he was an honorary member.

it was represented to him by leading members of the Congressional Commission that the interest of the occasion would be enhanced by his doing so, as, nearly thirty-seven years before, he had officiated in a similar capacity at the laying of the corner-stone.

[Boston, June 1, 1884.] You may be interested to learn that, at a Woman Suffrage meeting here some days ago, I was incidentally denounced as having in my political career 'derided and defied the moral sense of Massachusetts.' I have not the smallest wish ever to be made the subject of a cumbrous biography, but it would be a satisfaction to me to have clearly set forth hereafter, — in a way to save students of political history the trouble of wading through thick volumes of debates, — precisely in what manner, and exactly in what language, I so derided and defied the moral sense of Massachusetts. I make no pretension to have been infallible, and I dare say I made as many mistakes as my neighbors, but, on the whole, I am satisfied with my record and would not change it. Bancroft [1] has been urging me to write out reminiscences of public men since 1832, paying me the compliment of styling me a 'dispassionate and just judge of men and parties.' If I were as vigorous at seventy-five as he is at eighty-four, I might try to find time for something of the sort, though such reminiscences would have to be carefully edited to be palatable to some of my friends, himself among the number. Of some amusing experiences in early Whig politics, I was reminded at Lenox last autumn by Julius Rockwell, with whom I passed a most agreeable hour. In discussing more recent events, I was struck by the justice of his concluding remark. 'It is,' said he, 'no credit to the civilization of the nineteenth century that slavery could not have been abolished without that horrid war.' Have you read Bacourt's letters? [2] It seems he calls Kennedy and me,

[1] George Bancroft, the historian.

[2] Bacourt, a protégé of Talleyrand, was French minister to the

in 1841, 'les deux hommes les plus comme il faut de cet étrange monde Américain'; but, as a rule, he is severe and vituperative to a degree I should not have expected. I quite agree to what you say of Matthew Arnold. I found him pleasant enough at table, but there is a flippant tone about his writings, — an assumption of superior insight, to say nothing of want of faith, — which renders them distasteful to me. I cannot find that speech you ask for, though, in searching for it, I came across the manuscripts of two forgotten lectures of mine, — one, in Boston in 1834, on the Elective Franchise, the other, in Beverly in 1838, on the Elevation and Dignity of Labor. The former proved to contain not a few of the Civil Service views of the present hour, and the latter had some grains of wheat amidst the chaff; but neither seemed worth keeping, and I destroyed them.

During the summer and autumn of 1884 he was at times a good deal out of health, but managed to fulfil engagements in New York and elsewhere, besides substantially finishing his monument oration. Rarely prudent in the matter of fatigue and exposure, he had a theory that he did not take cold as readily as other people, and that his colds never amounted to much; but, as ill luck would have it, he suddenly developed one on the 10th of December, which was followed by pneumonia and threatened to prove fatal. For more than a fortnight he hovered between life and death, though his mind continued clear, and on one occasion, when supposed to be *in extremis*, his particular friend, Phillips Brooks, then Rector of Trinity, afterward Bishop of Massachusetts, offered at his bedside the prayer for a

United States in the early years of Mr. Winthrop's Congressional life, but the letters alluded to were not published till 1882.

sick person at the point of departure. As he left the house, Dr. Brooks remarked to me impressively upon the beauty of a Christian's death-bed; but the uncertainties of life were never more strikingly manifested than by the fact that more than eight years later Mr. Winthrop officiated as a pall-bearer at the funeral of Bishop Brooks, and wrote the Resolutions of the Vestry of Trinity on his demise. His recovery, however, was so slow and his weakness so great, that it was obvious that he would not be able to speak in public in February; and it was arranged that his address, or such portions of it as he had intended to deliver, should be read for him by some suitable person designated by himself. As it was important that the person so designated should have time to familiarize himself with the production, it became my duty to consult Mr. Winthrop on the subject, though he was then barely able to articulate. As the existing Hall of the House of Representatives, where the exercises were to take place, requires an exceptionally practised speaker to make himself heard, I foresaw he would be fastidious about a substitute, but I was not prepared for the melancholy groans which issued from his pillow as I successively propounded several of the names obligingly suggested, though when I reached that of John D. Long, formerly Governor of Massachusetts, then a member of Congress, and now Secretary of the Navy, he managed to utter, "Yes, if he will." Governor Long was neither an intimate friend of Mr. Winthrop, nor at all in sympathy with his political views, but he cheerfully agreed to perform this duty, and did so most acceptably. It was a bitter disappointment to have been so unex-

pectedly prevented from officiating in person on an occasion which seemed so appropriate a *finale* to a long oratorical career; but he was, in a measure, consoled by receiving, on the afternoon of the celebration, with other complimentary telegrams, the following one, signed by both the Senators and all the Representatives of the Old Bay State: —

"Your address to-day was received by the vast audience with unbounded admiration and satisfaction. We are proud that Massachusetts, by your genius and eloquence, has paid this unsurpassed tribute to the fame of Washington."

[March 15, 1885.] People are very kind and I am quite sure I do not deserve half the compliments I get. Whittier, for instance, referring to one passage in my address, writes that he knows of 'nothing finer in ancient or modern eloquence.' I am afraid this must be regarded as a sort of friendly tonic for a convalescent, but while I admit that I find it bracing, I am really none too well satisfied with my own performance. As some one, whose name I have forgotten, wrote, 'he who comes up to his own idea of excellence, must originally have had a very low standard in his mind.' I am gradually resuming my ordinary occupations, and hope to crawl on to Washington next month to get rid of our east winds; but after so prolonged an illness at so advanced an age, it would be idle for me to expect to regain any full measure of former activity, and I have arranged to retire from some public duties, — in particular, from the presidency of the Massachusetts Historical Society, which I have now held for thirty years.

This long tenure of office had been illustrated, at the outset, by increased attendance at and interest in our monthly meetings, and, in its progress, by very material additions to our pecuniary resources and by the publi-

cation of no less than thirty-nine volumes of historical material, to many of which he had largely contributed.[1] The utterances of leading members, both at the time of his retirement and of his death, — especially the remarks of his two successors in the chair,[2] and that exceptionally competent judge, the Treasurer,[3] — describe the value placed upon his services; but he himself fully realized that, while it had been his privilege and his pleasure to be foremost in our undertakings, his success was largely due to the cordial and zealous co-operation of many valued associates, chief of whom should always be remembered our late Vice-President, Charles Deane. It is, moreover, an open secret that Mr. Winthrop was not in accord with the majority of the Society upon the most important practical question which came before it during his presidency. Originally intended to consist of only thirty members, a number increased to sixty a few years later, this limit was raised to one hundred in 1857, a change due, in no inconsiderable degree, to Mr. Winthrop's influence. Twenty years later, in 1877, he proposed a further increase to one hundred and fifty; but, after an animated debate, his plan was rejected by a vote equivalent to two to one, the majority being strongly of opinion that the limit of one hundred should be a permanent one. His own idea was that, if sixty was not too large an outside-number at the close of the last century, one hundred and fifty would not

[1] Between 1855 and 1885 were issued seventeen volumes of Collections and twenty-one volumes of Proceedings, besides a volume of lectures on the early history of Massachusetts and a catalogue of the Society's library in two volumes.

[2] Dr. George E. Ellis and Charles Francis Adams the younger.

[3] Charles C. Smith.

have been immoderate eighty years later, in view of the wider field of selection created by the growth of Massachusetts, — and that, as considerably more than half of our members are habitually debarred from taking any active part, by reason of age, health, absence, official position, or the engrossing nature of their occupations, it would not be unwise to let down the bars and admit, from time to time, persons from whom assistance in the work of publication might reasonably be expected and who are liable to be shut out by the existing arrangement. Upon this work of publication he considered that the Society's wide reputation had rested in the past and must rest in the future; but while he rejoiced that an increased income made it possible for us, if we saw fit, to employ a salaried editor, he profoundly regretted that a dearth of volunteers should necessitate a change from the ancient method by which this editing was done by committees working together for the love of history.[1] A diligent student of all classes of historical literature, his preference was for writers who have the art to keep their individual prejudices in the background, and who seem willing to allow their readers to deduce deliberate opinions from an apparently unbiassed array of facts.

History [he wrote in one of his common-place books] is no mere rhetorical or sensational narrative, or compound of incidents or traditions, caught up at second-hand or at random, to sustain a preconceived theory or a favorite view. That only is worthy of the name of history which is founded on impartial research and diligent sifting of original records,

[1] For a paper upon this question of membership, submitted to the Society after Mr. Winthrop's death, but containing repeated references to his views, see 2 Proceedings, vol. x. pp. 315–327.

which is composed in the spirit of a judge rather than of an advocate, and which ever recognizes and ever obeys the two great laws laid down by the matchless Roman orator: *Ne quid falsi dicere audeat, ne quid veri non audeat.*

Throughout nearly ten years during which his life was prolonged after this resignation, he continued to attend our meetings as often as he was able, occasionally contributing a paper, or pronouncing an earnest tribute to the memory of some lamented associate. At the head of a few institutions he preferred still to serve, — among them the Children's Hospital of Boston, the prosperity of which he had much at heart; the Massachusetts Bible Society, at the annual meetings of which he was in the habit of making a short address; the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, the interests of which, in conjunction with his friend, Jeffries Wyman, he had done so much to foster in the beginning, and in connection with which he ultimately founded a scholarship; the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, his long association with which is pleasantly recalled by the attractive dormitory which bears his name; and that great Trust for Southern Education which had absorbed so much of his time since 1867, and with reference to which he maintained an onerous correspondence until a few weeks before his death. The subject had always interested him. So far back as 1854, in response to an invitation to take part in the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the University of South Carolina, he had written: —

> For myself, I cannot but feel that whatever is done for public instruction, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is done for the whole country; and I can hardly rejoice less in

the progress and prosperity of a college at Columbia than if it were at my own Cambridge.

At a later period, the suffering and impoverished condition of the South in the years immediately succeeding the Civil War caused him deep anxiety, and believing that indiscriminate negro suffrage, under the circumstances in which it was forced upon a conquered people, was a great wrong, and the corrupt and illegal legislation resulting from it a national disgrace, he could see but one possible remedy in the future, the diffusion of knowledge among all classes, without distinction of color.

> Slavery [he said at Yorktown] is but half abolished, emancipation is but half completed, while millions of freemen with votes in their hands are without education.

All his life in independent circumstances, he was never a rich man, which he often regretted, — not that he had any wish to increase his personal expenditure, but because perhaps his greatest pleasure was to give money to worthy objects. In proportion to his moderate income he gave largely, but it would have been a real delight to him to have had not merely the will but the means to contribute, from time to time, important sums to public endowments, among which there was none that in his old age appealed to him more strongly than institutions of learning in the Southern country. It was, therefore, a very agreeable surprise when, in recognition of what he had done, or tried to do, for Southern education, his name was given, in 1886, to the Winthrop Training School for Teachers, now the Winthrop Normal and Industrial

College of South Carolina, at Rock Hill, near Columbia, the corner-stone of the fine new buildings of which was laid, with appropriate ceremonies, upon his birthday in 1894. In the minute of his colleagues of the Peabody Trust after his death, — a minute prepared by Joseph H. Choate, — occurs the following passage: —

"It may be said with truth and moderation, that the great success of Mr. Peabody's intentions for the amelioration of the destitution and sufferings of the Southern people by education has been largely due to the ceaseless and vigilant devotion of Mr. Winthrop, during these twenty-seven years, to the business of the Trust. Not a school was aided but after careful consideration of its merits by him. Not a dollar was expended without his serious consideration of the utility of the outlay in the direction intended by Mr. Peabody. His lofty character, his courteous bearing, his uniform kindness in all his dealings with the Trustees over whom he presided, endeared him to each member of the Trust as a warm personal friend, and the light which his experience and knowledge shed upon every question which arose for deliberation always made the task of his associates an easy one. We felt that whatever he approved, after the study and reflection which he insisted upon giving to every measure projected, must, of course, be right. It was a very great thing for an institution like this to be presided over by such a man, who, for a quarter of a century, was willing to give to its continual service the best powers with which he was endowed."

In his own mind, however, the successful administration of this great Fund was largely due to others: — first, to the fact that distinguished men of different parties, and from all sections of the Union, readily consented to serve on the Board; next, that persons of

much experience in the work of Education rendered material aid in other ways; most of all, to his having been so fortunate as to secure at the outset, and for the next twelve years, for the all-important post of General Agent, a man so wise, zealous, and untiring as that eminent Northern educator, Barnas Sears; and last, but not least, to his having enlisted, as the fittest successor to Dr. Sears, the able and accomplished Southern statesman who still holds that position.[1]

[Nov. 10, 1886.] I enjoyed the Harvard Anniversary celebration, though not quite so much as its predecessor fifty years ago, when I was Chief Marshal. Lowell's oration was able, but rather long. Creighton, the delegate from Emmanuel College, was very happy at the dinner, where my own brief remarks were well enough, though the reporters made me say 'Alderman Sidney' for Algernon Sidney, and 'George Pickering' for George Ticknor. My fourth volume has been well received, and, with its predecessors, tells the story of my life. When I compiled the first I intended it chiefly for distribution, never dreaming that, at the end of five and thirty years, it would still be in occasional demand and not infrequently cited. I have always regretted it did not occur to me to furnish an index, as I did in the later ones.[2] My deafness perceptibly increases, but what disturbs

[1] Hon. J. L. M. Curry, formerly of Alabama, now of Virginia. During his absence as United States Minister to Spain, many of his duties were acceptably discharged by a member of the Board to whom Mr. Winthrop was indebted for much assistance in matters of detail and for constant acts of kindness, —Hon. Samuel A. Green, now senior member of this Society in order of election, and for a very long period its Librarian.

[2] What are habitually styled Mr. Winthrop's "Works" consist of four volumes of "Addresses and Speeches," published at intervals between 1851 and 1886, a smaller volume entitled "Washington, Bowdoin, and Franklin," published in 1876, and the two volumes of "Life and Letters of John Winthrop," already described. In a separate form are to be met

me even more is an occasional failure of memory. The other day I caught myself boggling at a quotation from Juvenal which I could have sworn I had at my fingers' ends.[1]

[Washington, April 23, 1887.] To-day in talking over old times and old friends with Corcoran,[2] who is now in his eighty-ninth year, I classified Calhoun as the metaphysical statesman, Webster as the judicial statesman, and Clay as the practical statesman. This off-hand characterization might require to be a little qualified and explained, but they were all three great men, and there are none like them in these days. The Senate is not what it was forty years ago, and the loss is not merely in ability but in dignity. I am not sure that in proportion to the population there are more blatant mountebanks in this country than of old, but they certainly seem to grow more noisy and mischievous year by year, and they are by no means confined to one particular

with various early productions for which he could find no room in his first volume, and a few later ones printed after 1886. Few things would have gratified him more could he have foreseen that, after his death, a distinguished Senator from Massachusetts not of his way of thinking upon most public questions (George F. Hoar), would write as follows: "No one who has to speak on any important occasion on any subject connected with American politics, or with history or literature, should fail to consult Mr. Winthrop's four volumes of Addresses and Speeches. They are storehouses, not only of original thought, but of apt quotation and illustration; and in his estimates of the character of his contemporaries or of men of former generations, I hardly recall an opinion which does not seem to me wise and sound, as well as expressed with unequalled grace and eloquence. . . . There is no man left who possesses such a store of rich and abundant learning, or such rare oratorical powers, or such dignity and grace of personal bearing."

[1] He had been a good deal amused some time before by a paragraph which went the rounds of the newspapers, dealing with the decline of a taste for Classical Scholarship in New England, asserting, probably with exaggeration, that not five persons in Massachusetts then under twenty years of age could quote ten lines of Juvenal, and that, in capping Latin verse, "old Robert C. Winthrop" was capable of bearing down single-handed any thirty young antagonists (not professional instructors) who could be selected from Boston and its neighborhood.

[2] William W. Corcoran, the banker.

party or section or class. I sometimes feel misgivings as to what the upshot will be in the twentieth century, which is now fast approaching.

[June 21.] Having concocted at odd moments an Ode to Queen Victoria on the occasion of her Jubilee, I hesitated whether to burn it or privately print it with my name attached, and was advised to do the latter. It soon found its way into the newspapers, bringing me many compliments, perhaps perfunctory, and to-day an anonymous letter, evidently from an educated person, who derides my poetry, as was perhaps justifiable, but then calls me a 'toady,' which I am unwilling to admit. I acknowledge, however, that in my old age I like to say kind things of people when I conscientiously can, but I try to discriminate after a fashion.

Undismayed by this caustic criticism, in the course of the two following years he similarly printed and distributed among a limited circle of friends a metrical translation of the *Dies Iræ*, a brace of sonnets to George Washington on the centennial anniversary of his inauguration as President, and some verses entitled *Lux Mundi*. In an earlier chapter of this memoir is included a specimen of his hymns, and I think it not inappropriate to insert here the ode above mentioned, dated twenty-seven years later.

Not as our Empress, do we come to greet thee,
August Victoria,
On this auspicious Jubilee:
Wide as Old England's realms extend,
O'er earth and sea, —
Her flag in every clime unfurled,
Her morning drum-beat compassing the world, —
Yet here her sway Imperial finds an end,
In our loved land of Liberty!

Nor is it as our Queen, for us to hail thee,
Excellent Majesty,
On this auspicious Jubilee:
Long, long ago our patriot fathers broke
The tie which bound us to a foreign yoke,
And made us free;
Subjects thenceforward of ourselves alone,
We pay no homage to an earthly throne, —
Only to God we bend the knee!

Still, still, to-day, and here, thou hast a part,
Illustrious lady,
In every honest Anglo-Saxon heart,
Albeit untrained to notes of loyalty:
As lovers of our old ancestral race, —
In reverence for the goodness and the grace
Which lend thy fifty years of Royalty
A monumental glory on the Historic page,
Emblazoning them forever as the Victorian Age;

For all the virtue, faith, and fortitude,
The piety and truth,
Which mark thy noble womanhood,
As erst thy golden youth, —
We also would do honor to thy name,
Joining our distant voices to the loud acclaim
Which rings o'er earth and sea,
In attestation of the just renown
Thy reign has added to the British Crown!

Meanwhile no swelling sounds of exultation
Can banish from our memory,
On this auspicious Jubilee,
A saintly figure, standing at thy side,
The cherished consort of thy power and pride,

Through weary years the subject of thy tears,
And mourned in every nation, —
Whose latest words a wrong to us withstood,
The friend of peace, — ALBERT, the Wise and Good!

[Nov. 7, 1888.] Harrison's election is conceded, an event which I fully expected and quietly predicted. I think highly of him and of many others who agree with him, but I regret the restoration to power of the Republican party, with all its sectional bitterness and boastful assumptions and swollen pension-lists. Cleveland is an able man who has done excellent things, but I often find his arguments more ponderous than persuasive. In dealing with the Tariff, he seemed to me to steer straight for the breakers, treating it as if it were a new question of which he was an original expounder. I have at last managed to struggle through 'Robert Elsmere,' who seems to me a weak, gushing sort of person, though with some good qualities.

It may be gathered from the two preceding sentences that the writer was neither a disciple of Richard Cobden, nor an admirer of the psychological school of modern fiction. He believed not merely in a tariff for revenue, but in a moderate degree of protection for domestic industries, and several early speeches on this subject have continued to be quoted as authorities up to the present time.[1] A prodigious reader, he had little liking for novels, often breaking down in the middle of com-

[1] He was thought to have a knack at imparting interest to fiscal questions, and since the early portion of this memoir was in type I have stumbled on a letter to him, dated Jan. 8, 1842, from John H. Clifford, who wrote: "I have just read aloud to Albert Fearing a puff of your Tariff speech in the New York 'American.' 'A beautiful speech, admirable in matter and in manner, full of new, original, enlarged, liberal, American ideas, — condensed, solid, profound, animated, and throughout forcibly eloquent.' I believe I have this by heart, for all praise of you goes to my heart."

paratively recent ones which have attracted marked attention, but which impressed him as consisting chiefly of wearisome conversations full of what he was fond of calling "point — no point." It was a pleasure to him to read aloud to members of his family, but he chose, for the most part, what used to be known as "standard" authors, and some idea of what might be termed the archaic character of his literary tastes may be gained from the fact that he considered Walter Scott a much preferable poet to Robert Browning. He held many old-fashioned views upon a variety of subjects, some of which were of a character to excite disgust or derision in the breast of any self-respecting "advanced-thinker." For instance, he believed that the best way to check crime lies in the prompt and effective punishment of a convicted criminal, and, though a tender-hearted man, he not merely approved the death-penalty, but considered flogging an admirable corrective to certain classes of offences.[1] He was a total disbeliever in unrestricted suffrage, preferring, with his friend Francis Lieber, an extensive suffrage, based upon property and education, within the gradual reach of all who chose strenuously to apply themselves. He realized, however, that in such a matter there can be no step backward, and that one might as well try to lessen the number of flatulent demagogues in our legislative bodies, or of sensational writers in the press, or of notoriety-seeking preachers in the pulpit.

[1] He agreed with Charles Sumner in finding much to admire in the simplicity and common sense of French legal procedure and the operation of the French Code. (See "Life of Sumner," vol. ii. pp. 284–287.) He did not claim to be an expert on this subject, but it often seemed to him that our own criminal laws afford too many loopholes for the escape of accused persons, particularly when they are supplied with funds.

He believed not only in a well-organized militia, but in a standing army large enough to secure the vigorous enforcement of the laws. In the abstract, he preferred the Republican form of government to any other, but the toppling over of a monarchy did not necessarily inspire him with unmixed exhilaration; he sometimes doubted whether anything would be gained by the exchange. To him the *name* mattered little, the essentials being, in his judgment, an honest and efficient municipal system affording clean streets, good roads, and adequate protection to life and property; a trained civil, diplomatic, and consular service, safe from the ravening greed of party-hacks and office-seekers; an intelligent and systematic effort to ameliorate the condition of the poorer classes; and a degree of personal liberty not allowed to degenerate into license. He was not sanguine enough to expect all this anywhere in absolute perfection, but to try to approximate it in different parts of the world seemed to him wiser and more practical than to thrill with what is vaguely termed "the enthusiasm of humanity," or to "prate," as John Quincy Adams called it, "about the Rights of Man." Next to an exalted opinion of himself, the most sustaining reflection to many a man is the firm belief which often accompanies it, not only that everything is going on for the best in the best of all possible worlds, but that his own country is by all odds the most favored spot in the universe and that its institutions should be unreservedly envied and imitated by other nations. If patriotism is to be gauged by any such spread-eagle standard, no amount of special pleading could disguise that Mr. Winthrop's was below par. Ardently

as he loved his country, he was far from considering it faultless. Preferring it to any other, he thought it not improbable that if he had been born and bred in some other, he might have liked it equally well. He had a very high opinion of the average ability of American public men of all parties, and a still higher opinion of the capacity and ingenuity of that composite race, the American people; but he sometimes wished they would not be so boastful, so credulous, so sensitive to the slightest foreign criticism, and so absorbingly agog about the doings — or alleged misdoings — of persons of title on the other side of the Atlantic.

In 1778, our former President, Thomas L. Winthrop, then a junior at Harvard, acquired in that neighborhood the nickname of "English Tom," although up to that time he had never been abroad. Forty-six years later, in the same college, his son Robert was dubbed by some of his classmates "English Winthrop," although he, too, had then never been far away from home. Seventy years after the last-named period, toward the close of an eloquent, complimentary, but discriminating tribute to Mr. Winthrop, after his death, by the present able representative of a family in which the latter had been personally acquainted with four generations of distinguished men, — Mr. Adams took occasion to express a doubt whether so "essentially patrician" a person (using that word in its best sense) did not sometimes give the impression of being a little out of place here, however useful he might make himself; whether he would not have been more in his native element in England, where he "would have vindicated and justified an aristocracy, while in a democracy, even though born

and brought up in it, he was never in all respects fully at home."[1] The suggestion is not without force, but it is, I think, the force of externals. Thomas L. Winthrop, though a most affectionate man at bottom, and one who made great pecuniary sacrifices for some of his children, was so conspicuous an example of the dignified and ceremonious demeanor of the old school, that even after his son had been elected to Congress he did not venture to sit down in his father's presence uninvited.[2] It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that he should have inherited something of formality and precision, and his native reserve, which mellowed in old age, was intensified by a shortness of vision which placed him at occasional disadvantage and made him sometimes appear cold or indifferent. In short, he had a good deal of what is traditionally known as "the English manner;" but though much given to hospitality and the society of cultivated persons, his tastes were rather those of a student than a man of the world. He disliked, even with intimates, to sit long over wine; he avoided public dinners whenever he could without giving offence, and made excuses for not joining dinner-clubs.[3] Save on one occasion when a friend took him to the Derby, I doubt if he ever saw a race, or a ball-match, in his life.

[1] Tributes of the Massachusetts Historical Society to Robert C. Winthrop, pp. 36–37.

[2] *Autres temps, autres mœurs.* Not only did the son's children sit down in their father's presence when they felt like it, but they were even tempted, I am ashamed to say, upon more than one occasion to sit, figuratively speaking, upon him.

[3] The only Club he really fancied (aside, of course, from those of college days) was the ancient informal "Wednesday Evening Club of 1777," composed of a limited number of leading representatives of different professions, the weekly gatherings of which he from time to time attended for more than half a century.

A more than indifferent horseman, he was so deplorable a whist-player that it was fortunate for his family that he was principled against any kind of stakes, so bad a shot that, at an annual battue on Naushon Island, he barely escaped the ignominy of bringing down a tame doe which had approached him in a confiding spirit. One additional trait would stamp him in the opinion of many as thoroughly "un-American": he never put himself in the way of receiving railway-passes, declined to make use of the complimentary ones which were often sent him, and insisted on travelling at his own expense. Worse remains behind. The lip of an "up to date" Harvard graduate would curl with passing pity for a bigoted old man who actually attached more importance to Greek and Latin than to athletic sports, who regretted for youths in their teens the sharp transition from the discipline of preparatory schools to the independence of University life, and did not believe them to be, as a rule, the fittest persons to select their studies. When authoritatively assured by some of those who take a strange delight in continually pointing out what a wretched little place, in their opinion, Harvard used to be, and how no facilities for obtaining any thing like a liberal education existed there, — or, indeed, anywhere in New England, — until within the last five and twenty years, he listened with his accustomed benignity; but in his secret soul there lurked an obstinate impression that, between 1818 and 1828, he had received hereabouts an amount of good, all-round, practical instruction for which he always felt grateful, which had been of the greatest service to him through life, and which had eventually enabled him to

be brought into contact with much younger men without suffering from too painful a sense of intellectual inferiority. He even upheld that system of committing to memory strings of names, facts, and dates, now lightly esteemed as "memorizing," and he largely attributed his early success as a public speaker to his having been continually drilled, both at the Boston Latin School and in college, in learning by heart and reciting in public long extracts from ancient and modern speakers and authors, — believing that he had not only derived great benefit from the criticisms received on such occasions, acquiring at the same time ease in the presence of an audience, but that the number and variety of the passages thus learned had afforded him much assistance in debate, in the way of apt illustration or appropriate quotation.

In the course of a familiar discussion of men and things in Washington during a session of Congress more than seven and forty years ago, Mr. Seward sententiously remarked "Moderation rarely succeeds in the world," to which Mr. Winthrop rejoined, "It may do better in the next," and he then quoted from Wordsworth's Happy Warrior, as the true idea of a statesman: —

> "Who, if he rise to station of command,
> Rises by open means, and there will stand
> On honorable terms, or else retire
> And in himself possess his own desire."

Seward took a long whiff at his cigar and said, after a pause, "I see now why Greeley no longer considers you a practical politician." Our associate, William

Everett, in a clever and appreciative notice of Mr. Winthrop[1] — worth reading by any one interested in the subject — says: —

"Moderation, temperance, self-control, the daily restraint, whether in body, mind, or spirit of passion and lawless excess, or indeed of excess within the law, — the constant, supreme and controlling respect for order, — this was the guiding principle of his public and private life. He learnt it from his studies, from the services of the Episcopal Church, from the traditions of his ancestors and the example of his father, from the tone and habits of Boston where he was born and brought up, from the character of Washington, and those leaders in his nation and his college which were daily held up to him for imitation, like John Jay and John Thornton Kirkland. He knew that eager, fiery, passionate spirits like Gouverneur Morris and John Adams, whose memory he loved and honored, had brought suffering to their friends and themselves by their fondness for extremes and absence of moderation; and he trained the character he inherited to even more temperance and order. He *would* love North and South alike; he *would* balance the sin of war against the sin of slavery; and he *would* cling, as a paramount duty of that patriotism, to that Union which Washington founded and Webster defended, to the very increase of that which his sainted ancestor had founded in 1643 among the four colonies of New England."

Assenting as Mr. Winthrop would gratefully have done to this general characterization, he would, I feel certain, have quietly demurred to the idea that he had learned any of his habitual moderation from "the tone and habits of Boston." The following passage from President Dwight's Travels of nearly a

[1] Harvard Graduates Magazine, March, 1895.

century ago, more nearly expresses his views on this subject:[1] —

"The people of Boston are characteristically distinguished by a lively imagination; an ardor easily kindled; a sensibility soon felt and strongly expressed; a character more resembling that of the Greeks than of the Romans. They admire, where graver people would only approve; detest, where cooler minds would only dislike; applaud a performance, where others would listen in silence; and hiss, where a less susceptible audience would only frown. This character renders them sometimes more, sometimes less amiable, usually less cautious; and often more exposed to future regret. From this cause their language is frequently hyperbolical, and their pictures of objects in any way interesting, highly colored. Hence also, their enterprises are sudden, bold, and sometimes rash. The tea shipped to Boston by the East India Company was destroyed. At New York and Philadelphia, it was stored (i. e. locked up from use). From the same source also, both persons and things are suddenly, strongly, and universally, applauded or censured. Individuals of distinction command a popularity which engrosses the public mind, and rises to enthusiasm. Their observations, and their efforts, are cited with wonder and delight; and such as do not join in the chorus of applause, incur the suspicion of being weak, envious, or malevolent. When the sympathetic ardor is terminated, the persons who have received this homage are, without any change of character, regarded, perhaps through life, as objects deserving of no peculiar esteem or attachment."

That Mr. Winthrop should not merely have long ago

[1] Rev. Timothy Dwight, long President of Yale College, and a man of exceptional powers of observation, was a grandson of Jonathan Edwards and grandfather of the actual Yale President of the same name. His "Travels in New England and New York" were not published until 1824, but were written much earlier.

copied this extract into his favorite common-place book, but have expressed the opinion in recent years that it has lost nothing of its appositeness by the lapse of time, suggests how miserably he fell short of ever having attained that chiefest and choicest attribute of the typical Bostonian, a complacent and complete satisfaction with his or her surroundings. Nobody could see much of him without recognizing his deep attachment to his native place and his pride in many events of its history; but this affection, it must be confessed, was neither indiscriminate nor unbridled. He was always a good deal of a cosmopolitan, liking variety and change, enjoying congenial society wherever he met with it, and by no means under the impression that his own neighborhood could fairly claim any approach to a monopoly of intelligence and cultivation. If, however, there were moments when the local atmosphere seemed to him a little narrow, a little dull, charged now and then with a tendency to mutual admiration and to make much of small things, pervaded more or less by a sort of hysteric sentimentalism upon public questions or private grievances, — he had at least the grace to confine such indecent criticisms to the bosom of his family and cheerfully accept the situation. Handicapped as he was throughout the greater part of his life by very uncertain health, he labored under another disadvantage of which he was not so conscious, the lack of what a friend whom he much admired, the late Archbishop Tait, used to call "the sacred principle of delegation," the secret of never doing what one can get equally well done by others, thereby economizing valuable time.[1] He had an old-

[1] Davidson's "Life of Tait," vol. ii. p. 555.

fashioned preference for doing things himself, and, in particular, for attending to his large correspondence single-handed, rarely, after his retirement from Congress, consenting to employ an amanuensis, — still more rarely, to leave any communication, however tedious or trivial, unacknowledged, and even systematically investigating endless and often unworthy appeals for charity from strangers at a distance. In one of his familiar letters from Providence to John Winthrop the elder, Roger Williams wrote: —

"I thankfully acknowledge your wisdom and gentleness in receiving so lovingly my late rude and foolish lines. You bear with fools gladly because you are wise."

I should be the last person to assert that this "bearing with fools gladly" (by which expression Roger, I imagine, had in view that patient endurance of cranks and bores which proceeds from innate goodness of heart) has been an unfailing characteristic of Governor Winthrop's descendants, but in the subject of this memoir it was exemplified to a very marked degree, and the result was that, although he rose early and sat up late, taking a positive pleasure in hard work, he gave up so much of his time to others that he continually had to postpone matters in which he was personally interested and never found time to finish several biographical undertakings. To friendly remonstrances upon this subject he once replied, — and the answer is a key to much of his life: —

The world is apt to rate men according to what they have done for themselves in the way of accomplishment or of acquisition; or in proportion to what may have been done for

them in the way of preferment or of praise. A day will come when men will be valued according to what they have done for others — for God, in the way of obedience and adoration — and for their fellow-men in the daily duties of life, and in promoting the general welfare of society. A man who shuts himself up in his library and writes books may secure for himself a wider and longer notoriety. His name may be often met with in catalogues or on shelves. But the man whose voice or pen is ready for every good cause, whose counsel and encouragement are withheld from no worthy occasion or worthy object, and who seeks to promote the good of his fellow-creatures and the glory of God, by his daily life and conversation, and by such occasional efforts of the written or the spoken word as fall in his way, is not to be considered less entitled to distinction than a popular author.

Laboriose nihil agens was his not infrequent and regretful description of himself in view of incessant and unexpected demands upon his time, but he was gratified by repeated evidences of a popular appreciation of his disposition to oblige, and was particularly pleased towards the last when one of the most valued of his Brookline neighbors and a greater sufferer than himself — our associate, Theodore Lyman — sent him from a sick-room the cheering message: "You never neglect a duty, and you never forget a friend."

[Boston, May 21, 1889.] There has grown up here a custom of devoting a good deal of space in the newspapers to the birthdays of local celebrities who have attained the dignity of octogenarians, and I have recently had my share — perhaps more than my share. Some of the leading articles were pleasant to read, in particular, the one in the 'Congregationalist.'[1]

[1] It contained the following passage: "Mr. Winthrop's claim upon popular regard is by no means wholly in connection with public affairs

I doubt, however, whether the average reporter knows much, or the average newspaper reader cares much, about the events of my career. Indeed, as to the political part of it, an old Whig who has never bowed the knee to Baal has become nearly as legendary as the Megatherium. But now and then I am pleasantly reminded of little feathers in my cap which I had almost lost sight of, as when Bennett Forbes, in the privately-printed Reminiscences I have just been reading, ascribes to me the passage of the Resolution which enabled him to take the 'Jamestown' to starving Ireland, or when, in the recently published diary of Philip Hone, I find an enthusiastic account of a speech of mine in New York in 1837.[1] I had many warm friends there at that time and long afterward. Indeed, I narrowly escaped being a New Yorker, my uncle John, the oldest of my grandfather's children, — who took his degree at Harvard as long ago as 1770, — having scandalized his relations in these parts by preferring to pitch his tent in New York, whither he persuaded several of his brothers to follow him. Even my father at one time hesitated, and I have often speculated on the difference it might have made to me. I incline to think I might have liked New York as well — perhaps better; such things are much a matter of early association. Of the luxurious, ultra-fashionable society which has developed itself there since the war, I know little or nothing, but in my day there were most attractive, unpretending people to be met with, and I have no doubt that similar circles still exist. Eighty years ago, when I was born, the difference between the two places was not nearly so great as it now is, New York having become more

or historical literature. He has ever been one of the most loyal, humble and consistent Christian men among us — one never ashamed of his profession of faith, or afraid to speak boldly in favor of vital godliness. Men of all denominations rejoice to do him honor; for to him the hoary head is a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness."

[1] Mr. Hone wrote: "Robert C. Winthrop is a fine fellow and a true Whig. His speech was one of the finest I ever heard, and would have done credit to Clay or Webster."

and more a huge metropolis, while Boston, in spite of its growth and many attractions, remains, as it always was, distinctly provincial.

[Aug. 28, 1891.] I am disposed to consider Benjamin Harrison the ablest off-hand platform-speaker now living, so far as I have any knowledge of them. Depew seems to be little more than a humorist, and Gladstone, to my mind, is greater in every other way than as an orator. I have repeatedly heard him pour forth floods of talk — in the House of Commons and elsewhere — but while I was always interested and generally instructed, I failed to be impressed by his eloquence. Nor can I think him an altogether safe political guide, but he is a wonderful man in many ways and delightful to meet at his own table. . . . In spite of Huxley's attacks upon what he calls the Miltonian theory, take my word for it, Milton and Moses will survive Huxley and Darwin. I have just read over again, in the original Greek, the twentieth chapter of St. John's Gospel, to me the most delightful chapter in the Bible — so exquisite, so vivid, so convincing. I never read it without fresh emotion. Nothing but Truth can account for such a description. Nothing but Truth, indeed, can account for the Bible, as a whole, — and I pity those who lose their relish for it or their faith in it.[1]

At the time of his death he was in his sixtieth year of service as a vestryman of Trinity Church, Boston,[2]

[1] He elsewhere wrote on the same subject: — The Bible is its own best witness. Its very existence after so many ages, its miraculous composition by those inspired men, and its marvellous preservation from all the accidents of time and chance, bespeak nothing less than the hand of God. No evolution produced that volume; and no revolution of thought, or act, or human will, can ever prevail against it. Revisions and new versions may improve, or may impair, the letter, but they can never change its essential character. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, through which he brought life and immortality to light, like its Divine Author, is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

[2] This should be qualified by mentioning that, about half a century ago, he was ejected from office by what was then termed a "Puseyite

but what is now technically known as "a Churchman" I am afraid he cannot truthfully be stated to have been for the space of sixty minutes — for while he preferred the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States to any other religious body of his acquaintance, he was unable to perceive that it could justly claim to be styled "the Church of America."

I am [he wrote in 1848, and of this mind he continued to the end] an Episcopalian of the Arnold and Whately school, with something more of the Paley admixture. I agree with Lord Bacon that unity does not necessarily mean uniformity, but if we are to aim at Christian unity, I am not in favor of letting prelatical assumption stand in the way of it. I do not fancy too much deference to the Church of England, however individually worthy of respect may be many of her chief pastors and teachers. We are not a branch of that Church, but an independent offshoot from it.

Like an ancestor of his in Queen Elizabeth's time he was "a zealous favorer of the Reformed Faith," but while glorying in a Puritan ancestry he did not share the satisfaction experienced by so many pious souls in frequently nagging the Church of Rome, which he considered to have become in his own day a bulwark of law and order in many parts of Christendom. Both inside and outside of his own communion his clerical intimacies covered a wide range: a Catholic Bishop of Boston (Fitzpatrick) who had been his schoolmate, and leading representatives of the great Evangelical sects of nonconformists, were his always welcome guests, while some of the friends upon whose advice he most relied, and for

cabal," composed of some of his own friends, who relented and let him back a few months later.

whom he cherished the utmost esteem and affection, were Unitarian ministers, of the Conservative wing of that denomination. Although he had no taste for literature in which the *odium theologicum* is unpleasantly manifest, he endeavored to familiarize himself with opposite shades of opinion, holding that in religious, as in secular controversies, there is nothing more narrowing to the intellect than to confine one's self to the utterances of writers or speakers with whom one is in substantial agreement. One of the greatest pleasures of the last four and twenty years of his life was in listening to the sermons of Phillips Brooks, for whose character and career he had the warmest admiration, although their views upon most political, some social, and even a few religious questions, were by no means in harmony. Aside from his love of fine Church music, he disliked all ceremonial which savored of sacerdotalism, yet no one better appreciated than he the self-denying, devoted lives led by many of the Ritualist clergy among the poor. As he wrote of another, he was emphatically a man of "Catholicity and Charity," God-fearing, careful of the feelings of others; but he undoubtedly had his pet aversions, chief among which were positive philosophy and negative religion and that gradual substitution of Science for Faith, which leaves the latter at best a shadowy scheme of morals, and opens the way, as he believed, to every variety of infidelity and charlatanry. So far back as 1852, in his address to the Alumni of Harvard, he had said on this subject: —

> There are fields enough for the wildest and most extravagant theorizings without overleaping the barriers which separate things human and Divine. Indeed, I have often thought

that modern science had afforded a most opportune and providential safety valve for the intellectual curiosity and ambition of man, at a moment when the progress of education, invention, and liberty had roused and stimulated them to a pitch of such unprecedented eagerness and ardor. Astronomy, chemistry, and, more than all, geology, with their incidental branches of study, have opened an inexhaustible field for investigation and speculation. Here, by the aid of modern instruments and modern modes of analysis, the most ardent and earnest spirits may find ample room and verge enough for their insatiate activity and audacious enterprise, and may pursue their course not only without the slightest danger of doing mischief to others, but with the certainty of promoting the great end of scientific truth.

Let them lift their vast reflectors or refractors to the skies, and detect new planets in their hiding-places. Let them waylay the fugitive comets in their flight, and compel them to disclose the precise periods of their orbits, and to give bonds for their punctual return. Let them drag out reluctant satellites from 'their habitual concealments.' Let them resolve the unresolvable nebulæ of Orion or Andromeda. They need not fear. The sky will not fall, nor a single star be shaken from its sphere.

Let them perfect and elaborate their marvellous processes for making the light and the lightning their ministers, for putting 'a pencil of rays' into the hand of art, and providing tongues of fire for the communication of intelligence. Let them foretell the path of the whirlwind and calculate the orbit of the storm. Let them hang out their gigantic pendulums, and make the earth do the work of describing and measuring her own motions. Let them annihilate human pain, and literally 'charm ache with air, and agony with *ether*.' The blessing of God will attend all their toils, and the gratitude of man will await all their triumphs.

Let them dig down into the bowels of the earth. Let them rive asunder the massive rocks and unfold the history

of creation as it lies written on the pages of their piled up strata. Let them gather up the fossil fragments of a lost Fauna, reproducing the ancient forms which inhabited the land or the seas, bringing them together, bone to his bone, till Leviathan and Behemoth stand before us in bodily presence and in their full proportions, and we almost tremble lest these dry bones should live again. Let them put nature to the rack, and torture her in all her forms, to the betrayal of her inmost secrets and confidences. They need not forbear. The foundations of the round world have been laid so strong that they cannot be moved.

But let them not think by searching to find out God. Let them not dream of understanding the Almighty to perfection. Let them not dare to apply their tests and solvents, their modes of analysis or their terms of definition, to the secrets of the spiritual kingdom. Let them spare the foundations of faith. Let them be satisfied with what is revealed of the mysteries of the Divine Nature. Let them not break through the bounds to gaze after the Invisible, — lest the day come when they shall be ready to cry to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us ![1]

During the larger part of 1891 the condition of his heart made him a great sufferer, but his health improved in the following winter, and he was able in the spring of 1892 to pay his accustomed visits to New York and Washington. On his return he had hardly established himself in Brookline for the summer when, on the sixteenth of June, a crushing blow fell upon him in the death of his wife, much younger than himself, after a

[1] It is quite enough to assume [he added long afterward] that in the absence of more positive light from above, the Divine is not to set limits to the human, in philosophy and science. But it can never be admitted that the human is to prescribe bounds to the Divine, — the finite to the Infinite! Anything can be comprehended more easily than a limited Omniscience, a restricted Omnipotence, a circumscribed Omnipotence.

ÆT. 82.

short illness. Dependent to an unusual degree upon a cheerful home, it so happened that his domestic life had been clouded at intervals by many sorrows, of which this last was the greatest, in view of his age and infirmities, and the fact that during a union of nearly seven and twenty years they had been very rarely separated, her devotion to him having been only exceeded by his admiration of her. He seldom trusted himself to speak or write of this bereavement, but the spirit of resignation he tried hard to exhibit is shown by the following extracts from two of his favorite authors, which he entered in a diary soon after the event: —

However dark and profitless, however painful and weary existence may have become; however any man, like Elijah, may be tempted to cast himself beneath the juniper tree and say, 'It is enough, now, O Lord!' — life is not done, and our Christian character is not won, so long as God has anything left for us to suffer or anything left for us to do.

F. W. Robertson.

One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists, one only: an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power,
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.

Wordsworth.

It was his lot to survive this irreparable loss nearly two and a half years, gradually resuming his former occupations, and, to kill time, inventing new ones, such as contributing to "Scribner's Magazine" a little article

on the death of John Quincy Adams, and the longer one on Webster's methods of oratory to which I have before alluded, besides revising, adding to, and privately printing his "Reminiscences of Foreign Travel." For change of scene he passed the summers of 1893 and 1894 at Nahant, where the bracing air had often invigorated him in the distant past. People were very kind in calling to see him, and he was grateful for it, but he bored himself extremely. He would have been bored anywhere. The interest in life had gone out of him, — mental depression and physical suffering remained. He missed more and more his early friends. The last of them with whom he had been in the habit of occasionally corresponding, Hamilton Fish, died in the summer of 1893.

I see [wrote Mr. Winthrop] a newspaper paragraph to the effect that, although Fish only left the State Department in 1877, not one average reader in a hundred could have told whether he was alive or dead. This might well be true of me, but it ought not to have been true of him. He rendered important public services, and my whole intercourse with him, stretching over more than half a century, always renewed and confirmed my impression of the sturdy honesty of his character.[1]

[1] As another instance of the evanescence of even local reputations, it occurs to me to mention that, on the morning after Mr. Winthrop's death, I was somewhat beset by reporters, — all intelligent young men, but several of them a little in the dark as to the antecedents of the subject of their inquiries. "I believe," remarked one to me, "that I am accurate in stating that Mr. Winthrop was a distinguished past Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic?" I replied that he could claim no such distinction. "Surely," said another, "I am right in describing him as the chosen co-worker of Charles Sumner?" I gently suggested that "political antagonist" would be a safer designation. A third brought me a galley-proof, with the conspicuous double-leaded head-line: "Death of an Old Abolition War-Horse!" This was cruellest of all.

In the autumn of 1893 he was well enough to meet the Peabody Trustees in New York, and afterward passed a fortnight in Berkshire. In November he took some part in the special meeting of this Society which commemorated his friend Francis Parkman, and he was present at the official reception given by Dr. Ellis after our annual meeting in April, 1894, having in the preceding month made a short address to the Bible Society, which proved to be the last of his public utterances. In the summer he perceptibly failed.

I am told [he wrote at Nahant on the 23d of August] that my miserable condition is due, for the most part, to my being in my eighty-sixth year. I cannot push back the dial, but oh, that I could have what Keble describes: —

> 'Such calm old age as conscience pure
> And self-commending hearts endure
> Waiting their summons to the sky,
> Content to live, but not afraid to die.'

I am harassed by no twinges of conscience, and I am not afraid to die, but I am weary, weary of the life I lead. My heart is in such a state that for years I have not had a good night's rest without narcotics, — and these now produce little or no effect upon me. I sleep, if I sleep at all, in a chair, or propped up by pillows. I have other ailments which require the constant attendance of a surgical nurse. I am very deaf, often depressed, — sometimes, I fear, impatient, — conscious that I am a burden to my daughter, upon whom the responsibility of taking care of me chiefly falls. It is hard, too, to be able to do so little when I have been accustomed to do so much, and to feel that I am no longer of the smallest use in the world. There is nothing left but to have faith in God's Providence and trust in Him to the last. *Sursum corda!*

His strength of will enabled him to prepare again to meet the Peabody Trustees in New York in October, and

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it was only the day before his intended departure that his physician forbade the journey. A few weeks later it was thought prudent to bring him to town from Brookline, though he seemed in no immediate danger and was able to come downstairs. Gradually, however, his mind began to wander, and on the afternoon of Tuesday, November fourteenth, he sat for the last time in his study in Marlborough Street,[1] turning over the leaves of his favorite hymn-book, but unable to collect his thoughts. That evening he lost consciousness, passing away, without apparent suffering, forty-eight hours later.

By his first marriage he had four children, three sons and a daughter. His eldest son died in infancy; the second, for many years a member of this Society, is the compiler of this memoir; the youngest, the late John Winthrop of Stockbridge, sometime a member of the Massachusetts Legislature and a man of widespread personal popularity, followed his father to the grave in less than a year. He left also three grandchildren and two step-children, — a son of his second wife and a daughter of his third, — to all of whom he was tenderly attached. In earlier life he had looked forward to being eventually laid with his parents, several of his brothers and sisters, and some earlier generations of his family, in an ancient tomb in King's Chapel burial-ground; but when the growth of Boston rendered interments undesirable in the heart of a business community, he built a simi-

[1] For some years after his first marriage he occupied No. 7 Tremont Place, moving thence to No. 17 Summer Street. On his second marriage he migrated to No. 1 Pemberton Square, a house with which he was long associated; but for the last twenty years of his life his winter home was No. 90 Marlborough Street.

lar tomb at Mount Auburn, over the doorway to which was placed a slab intended for an inscription to himself. Not long before his death I sounded him as to how this should be worded. "I leave that to you," he answered, "but make it short and comprehensive." I accordingly had the stone cut as follows: —

ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

Born May 12, 1809.
Died November 16, 1894.

EMINENT AS A SCHOLAR, AN ORATOR, A STATESMAN, AND A PHILANTHROPIST, — ABOVE ALL, A CHRISTIAN.

This does not seem to me excessive, and I doubt whether he could be better described in fifteen words.

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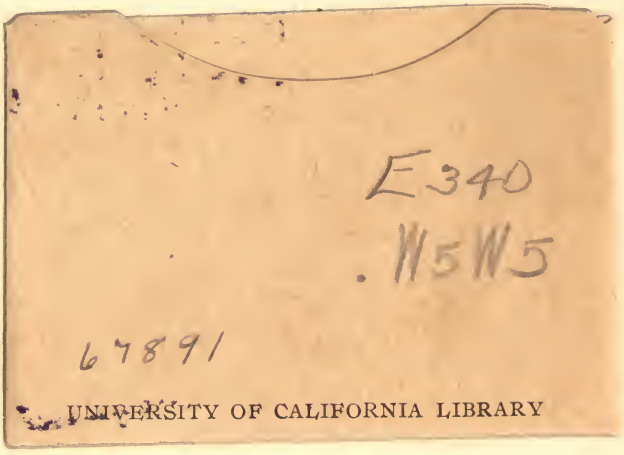
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